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THE

MISCELLANEOUS

WORKS

Of the RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY ST. JOHN,

LORD VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.

VOLUME II.

REMARKS

ON THE

HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND.

VOLUME II.

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TO A CERTAIN

LORD.

My Lord,

OF the whole legion once in your pay, perhaps not one writer continues in your ſervice; as they followed you for the loaves and fiſhes only, their zeal failed with their appointments, and they found it neceſſary to take up ſome other trade.

But though, like them, my Lord, I attended your meridian, I ſhall not, like them, forſake you at your decline; on the contrary, I am ſtill as much at your devotion as ever, and it is notorious, you have now as much to beſtow as I expected then.

As therefore I make my approaches with the ſame ſincerity, I depend on the ſame reception; more eſpecially when I farther aſſure you, that, if I happen to be the longeſt liver, I will be as juſt to your memory, as I have been to your adminiſtration.

Were I in the ſame way of thinking with that Roman tyrant, who wiſhed his reign might be diſtinguiſhed to poſterity by ſome plague, famine, earthquake, or other dreadful viſitation, I ſhould take a pride in boaſting that ***** the great, was my contemporary. But my ambition is checked by my humanity, and, as I am, I can only glory that, as long as the Britiſh annals ſhall be read, our names, like the poiſon and the antidote, will be coupled together.

Your Lordſhip will, I hope, excuſe this little ſacrifice to vanity. Every man is fond of an opportunity to throw an advantageous light upon himſelf; and though I profeſſedly

ſpread

ſpread the canvas for your portrait, I could not help edging in a ſlight ſketch of my own.

I ſhall not, however, forget, that your Lordſhip is to be the principal figure, nor that I ought to be content with an obſcure corner of the piece, like your equerry, holding your ſtirrup, or preſenting that head-piece, which none but you would preſume to put on; or rather as your ſquire, aſſiſting to diſarm you, or helping you out of your ſaddle, &c.

My Lord, dedications to great men, like the pictures of fine women, muſt preſent nothing but charms and graces: do not bluſh therefore—But why do I caution you againſt a weakneſs you are in no danger of falling into? Should I out-do Pliny in panegyric, ſhould I out-do an addreſs in complaiſance, you have received an hundred other dedications which have done the ſame; and, as you have ever paid for all they contained, all was but your due.

But

But it is not my design to tread the beaten track, and compare you either to Fabius or Cicero. To insinuate you ever had a type or a parallel, is to injure you. No, you are yourself; an original; a none-such; nor is it likely posterity should ever produce such another. It is enough for me to give you your own; I aspire to no more; and that I dare not attempt but by figure only.

The serpent, we are told, was, by creation, the subtlest beast of the field, and therefore became a proper tool for the Devil. Where any thing was to be got, he could find a way to wriggle himself in; when any misfortune threatened him, he could find a way to wriggle himself out. Once a-year he threw off his slough, and appeared to be a new creature. Golden pippins were his favourite fruit, or rather the Sodom-apple, fair without, but rotten at the core. Life he promised, death he devised, and corruption he entailed

tailed from generation to generation. Out of Paradiſe, it is true, he was driven; but though his head was threatened, we do not find that the ſentence hath as yet taken place; on the contrary, he no longer grovels on his belly, or licks the duſt, but hath put forth wings, claims a place among the powers of the air, and exactly reſembles the dragon in the Revelations.

The old jingle of *honores mutant mores* you have the glory, my Lord, to be an illuſtrious exception to; however enlarged with ſtile and title, you continue to be within the very ſame; and thereby ſhew the eminent inſignificancy of ſuch vanities.

That you condeſcended to accept of them, will ever to ſome be matter of wonder; that you condeſcended to ſolicit them, will never perhaps be believed. Why ſhould a man, who deſpiſed the eſſence, be fond of the name? And that you always had the magnanimity to be above opinion,

opinion, is manifeſt by every action of your life.

But what labyrinth is there ſo intricate, that if you follow the thread, may not be explored? A peerage was only the means, a quietus was the end: you had performed your voyage, your bark was crazy, the ſtorm was up, and the firſt port welcome. While the helm was worth holding, you held it; when only an encumbrance, you reſigned it; equally pleaſed with your own eſcape, that your enemies ſucceeded to the danger, and that your own crew continued to navigate the veſſel as before.

Thus far, my Lord, I have done as on this occaſion I ought; touched both on your peerleſs qualities, and peerleſs ſucceſs, with the delicate hand of a dedicator: without the leaſt reflection whether the portico and the building are of a piece; and when I was on the point of concluding, the following remarkable paſſage ſtared me in the face.

"The

" * The laws muſt be deſtroyed, " before they can ſuffer, or you e- " ſcape."

A tremendous prophecy, my Lord, and what you can never be out of the reach of, till you are in your grave!

That no man ought to be eſteemed happy till he is dead, is the ſaying of Solon. Whether or not, therefore, the ſtream of your good fortune is to flow on without interruption, whether you are to be cut or drop from the tree, I am afraid to pronounce. On the ſtage, indeed, when a maſter-poet exerts his power over the paſſions, his victim at the end of the fourth act is frequently made to ſing a requiem to his cares and ſorrows, as if for ever done away. But alas! his cataſtrophe is then at hand, and fate ready to drop the curtain.

Thus much ſhall ſerve for what I had to addreſs perſonally to your

* Letter XII. page 118.

Lord-

Lordſhip; and as to the Work, which, though not dignified with your name, is now to be made partaker of your immortality; what I have to add on that head will, perhaps, make its appearance with more propriety in a preface to the courteous reader.

Leſt, however, your Lordſhip ſhould hold me without excuſe, for thus ſolemnly devoting it to you, know that I have done it for the ſame reaſon, that pilots deſire to plant buoys upon the Goodwin.

I am, as ever,

My LORD,

Your devoted,

humble ſervant,

CALEB D'ANVERS.

PREFACE.

LOOSE papers reſemble the Sibyl's leaves; however oraculous their contents. Time, almoſt with a ſingle breath, ſunders them for ever; a fate which, perhaps, moſt modern productions deſerve, but what few authors can bear!

The letters that follow were, however, neither made public at firſt, nor collected now, as a trap for reputation; if they had, no doubt the writer would have put in his claim, as ſoon as the voice of the nation had declared in his favour. It is rather to be ſuppoſed they were occaſioned by a more extenſive and leſs pleaſing view, ariſing from a ſurvey of the dangerous deſigns of thoſe above, and the calamitous ſituation of thoſe below.

Had they had their full effect; had they taught one ſide that they could no otherwiſe diſarm oppoſition, than by approving themſelves in deed the friends and ſervants of the public; or the other that their ſtrength conſiſted in their unanimity, and their importance in their integrity; perhaps the author might have exclaimed with old Simeon, *Lord, now let thy ſervant depart in peace—for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*; and put a period to his labours.

But as neither of theſe neceſſary ends ſeems as yet to have been fully obtained; as the veſſel of our iniquities is not yet full; as power is ſtill warped to the prejudice of thoſe it was ordained to ſerve, and

oppoſition is like to continue as violent as ever; what was firſt fired occaſionally, as a beacon to give the alarm, muſt now be kept continually alight, that the danger may be always viſible, and that no direction may be wanting to thoſe, who would throw themſelves into the breach, with a firm reſolution to die or to ſubdue it.

If ever a teſt for the trial of ſpirits can be neceſſary, it is now; if ever thoſe of liberty and faction ought to be diſtinguiſhed from each other, it is now; if ever it is incumbent on the people to know what truth is, and to follow it, it is now.

Hitherto, perhaps, liberty, like oil, hath only covered the ſurface, while the vinegar of faction hath corroded the conſtitution underneath, though good hath reſulted from both; for even faction muſt be at firſt popular, and popularity cannot be acquired without the evidence of ſome good deeds, which, like Abraham's faith, may hold the place of righteouſneſs.

There is a time when factions, by the vehemence of their own fermentation, ſtun and diſable one another; and this is the time when plain ſenſe, and downright honeſty, have the only chance to get uppermoſt, and introduce reformation.

Perhaps that time is now; perhaps party leaders of all kinds are equally in diſgrace; and the public may be grown wiſe enough to judge of the tree by its fruits.

The republication of theſe papers is therefore, at this time, moſt eſpecially ſeaſonable. If we do not take advantage of the ſtanding water of faction, the tide will ſoon turn one way or the other, and carry all before it; and this can be effected no way ſo happily

happily as by ſiding with ſuch, while ſuch are to be found, who appear to have been really inſpired with the genuine ſpirit of liberty; who have purged themſelves from the very ſuſpicion of ſiniſter views, by refuſing, at any price, to forego the noble cauſe they had eſpouſed, or give a ſanction to the ruin of their country.

Let but one great, brave, diſintereſted, active man ariſe, and he will be received, followed, and almoſt adored, as the guardian genius of theſe kingdoms. Without a foundation of ſolid virtue, and public ſpirit, the nobleſt accompliſhments loſe their importance; with it common ſenſe grows venerable, and the dove triumphs over the ſerpent.

If then there is any one man of ſufficient eminence among us, who, upon a thorough ſelf-examination, feels himſelf to be within this deſcription, let him ſtand forth; and, by a ſolemn, open, and explicit renunciation of all power, places, penſions, and every other ſpecies of court-merchandize, lay the ground-work for obtaining the confidence of the people; and, as far as honour and infamy can bind, give ſecurity for the religious obſervance of his engagement.

But if modeſty ſhould hinder what public neceſſity makes a duty, let this one man endeavour to inſpire a few more with the ſame generous ſentiments, and let them divide both the ſervice and the glory.

Glory, which, however decried and diſcountenanced of late, is the only thing worth the ambition of the great, and what the voice of the people only can beſtow!

POLITICS.

POLITICS.

LETTER I.

SIR,

SINCE the buſy ſcene of the year is over at home, and we may perhaps wait ſeveral months before the ſucceſsful negotiations of France furniſh us with new hopes of a general pacification, and give you occaſion to carry your ſpeculations forward, it may be proper enough for you to caſt your eyes backwards; to reflect on your own conduct; and to call yourſelf to account before your own tribunal.

I am ſo much perſuaded of the integrity of your intentions, that I do not in the leaſt ſuſpect you will think my advice impertinent; and therefore I ſhall attempt to lead your thoughts on this ſubject, by giving you an account of ſome parts of a converſation, at which I happened to be preſent very lately.

Several of your papers, and ſeveral of thoſe which have been written againſt you, lay before a company, which often meets, rather to live than to drink together; according to that diſtinction, which Tully makes to the advantage of his own nation over the Greeks. They diſpute without ſtrife, and examine as diſpaſſionately the events and the cha-

racters of the preſent age, as they reaſon about thoſe, which are found in hiſtory. When I came in, a gentleman was ſaying, that your victories had been cheaply bought; and that he had not ſeen one champion, able to break a launce, enter the liſts againſt you; upon which ſome were ready to obſerve the inconſiſtencies of human nature, and how hard it often proves to hire men to avow and defend even that, which they are hired to act. Others were willing to hope that corruption had not ſpread very wide, nor taken root very deep amongſt us. All agreed, that if your papers could be ſuſpected to be written in oppoſition to the preſent miniſters, the feeble and low oppoſition you have met with would deſerve to be looked upon as a very melancholy ſymptom for them; ſince it would denote that their cauſe was deemed univerſally bad; or that their perſons were grown univerſally odious among men of ſenſe, ingenuity and knowledge. It would denote their guilt or their misfortune; perhaps both.

Here one of the company interpoſed, by obſerving very prudently, "that any thing ſo void of probability, as not to fall even under ſuſpicion, was unworthy of farther conſideration. But, ſaid he, whatever particular views Mr. D'Anvers may have had, one general effect, which I cannot approve, has followed from his writings. We muſt remember that when he began to publiſh his weekly lucubrations, univerſal quiet prevailed, if not univerſal ſatisfaction; for in what place, or at what time was the laſt ever found? Few people enquired; fewer grumbled; none clamoured; all acquieſced. Every man enquires with eagerneſs, and examines with freedom. All orders of men are more intent

than

than I ever observed them to be on the course of public affairs; and deliver their judgments with less reserve upon the most important. From this alteration, for which the Craftsman is chiefly answerable, no good consequence can, I think, proceed; and it is visible that several inconveniencies may."

To this many of us could by no means assent. We apprehended that in a country, circumstanced like ours, and under a government, constituted like ours, the people had a right to be informed, and to reason about public affairs; that when wise and honest measures are pursued, and the nation reaps the advantage of them, the exercise of this right will always be agreeable to the men in power; that, indeed, if weak and wicked measures are pursued, the men in power might find the exercise of this right disagreeable, inconvenient, and sometimes dangerous to them; but that, even in this case, there would be no pretence for attempting to deprive the people of this right, or for discouraging the exercise of it; and that to forbid men to complain, when they suffer, would be an instance of tyranny but one degree below that, which the triumvirs gave, during the slaughter and terror of the proscriptions, when by edict they commanded all men to be merry upon pain of death.

The person, from whom we differed, brought us back to the particular case of your writings, Mr. D'Anvers. He endeavoured to support what he had said against them in this manner;

"There was no good reason for raising this spirit, which I dislike, in the nation, when the Craftsman began to write, or there was such a reason. If there was none, why has he given so much alarm?

If there was one, how has it come to paſs that ſo great an alarm has produced ſo little effect? Will you ſay that he had very good reaſon to rouze this ſpirit, but that it has hitherto had no opportunity of exerting itſelf? Or will you ſay that his reaſons were good, and the opportunity fair; but that the minds of men, which have been convinced by the former, have not yet been determined to improve the latter? I obſerve on all theſe alternatives, that if there was no good, and even preſſing reaſon to raiſe ſuch a ſpirit in the nation as I diſlike, (becauſe I expect no national benefit, and I fear much inconveniency from it) Mr. D'Anvers has acted a very wicked part, and is little better than a ſower of ſedition. If there was ſuch a reaſon, but no ſuch opportunity, he has acted a very weak part, and is but a ſhallow politician. If there was ſuch a reaſon and ſuch an opportunity, but no diſpoſition in the minds of men to follow their conviction, you may excuſe your favourite author, perhaps by alledging that the minds of men are in the power of God alone; but you will repreſent our national condition to be more deſperate than I ever thought it, or am yet willing to believe it. Upon this ſuppoſition I affirm, that Mr. D'Anvers is not to be excuſed, if he continues to write; for if he cannot raiſe this diſpoſition by perſuaſion, what does he aim at farther? I hope that he and you, who defend him, admire as much as I profeſs to do that divine ſaying of Plato; *We may endeavour to perſuade our fellow-citizens; but it is not lawful to force them even to that, which is beſt for them.*

Whilſt all this paſſed, I took notice that an antient venerable gentleman ſhewed more emotion, and

and greater impatience than I remembered to have ſeen him ever expreſs before. As ſoon as the other had concluded, he broke ſilence in the following manner:

"You have endeavoured to prove, Sir, that the Craftſman ſhould not have begun to write; or at leaſt that he is inexcuſable for continuing. Now I not only differ from you, but I differ from you upon the very foundation, on which you have eſtabliſhed that whole argument.

"The face of things was, I agree, as calm as you repreſent it to have been, when my honeſt cotemporary Caleb took up his pen. They were halcyon days truly. We were not only quiet, but we ſeemed implicit, and dull uniformity of eternal aſſent prevailed in every place. I agree that ſince that time things are very much altered. A ferment or ſpirit, call it which you pleaſe, is raiſed; but, I bleſs God, it is not the blind and furious ſpirit of party. It is a ſpirit, which ſprings from information and conviction, that has diffuſed itſelf not only to all orders of men, as you obſerved, but to men of all denominations. Even they, who act againſt it, encourage it. You cannot call it Toryiſm, when ſuch numbers of independent Whigs avow it. To call it Whigiſm would be improper likewſe, when ſo many Tories concur in it. He who ſhould call it Jacobitiſm, would be too abſurd to deſerve an anſwer.

What is it then? It is, I think, a revival of the true old Engliſh ſpirit, which prevailed in the days of our fathers, and which muſt always be national, ſince it has no direction but to the national intereſt; *eſt jam una vox omnium*; and I hope we ſhall never have occaſion to add, *magis odio firmata quam præſidio*.

" This ſpirit the Craftſman has contributed to raiſe; and I affirm, in my turn, that ſuppoſing him to have no other reaſon for raiſing and ſupporting it than a general obſervation of the contrary temper, into which the nation had fallen, he deſerves the acknowledgments of every honeſt man in Britain, for the part he has acted. The diſpute between us is thus reduced to one ſingle propoſition: and if I prove this, all your reaſoning, Sir, falls of courſe to the ground."

The other aſſented: the ſtate of the diſpute was fixed; and the old gentleman proceeded in his argument to this effect:

" Give me leave to borrow, upon this occaſion, an image, which my Lord Bacon employs, in one of his Eſſays, upon another. A people, who will maintain their liberties, muſt pray for the bleſſing of Judah, to avoid the fate of Iſſachar; the greateſt curſe which can befal them. Far from jogging on ſilently and tamely, like the aſs between two burthens, ſuch a people muſt preſerve ſome of the fierceneſs of a lion, and even make their roar to be heard like his, whenever they are injured, or ſo much as threatened.

" I do not mean to recommend your ſeditious, rebellious ſpirit, which will create a perpetual ſcene of tumult and diſorder, and expoſe every ſtate to frequent and dangerous convulſions. Neither would I be thought to approve even that popular peeviſhneſs of temper, which ſometimes prevails, ſo as to diſcompoſe the harmony of the ſeveral orders of government. But this I aſſert, that liberty cannot be long ſecure, in any country, unleſs a perpetual jealouſy watches over it, and a conſtant determined reſo-

reſolution protects it in the whole body of the nation. The principle muſt be permanent and equal. The exerciſe of it ought to be proportioned to the occaſions. The hundred eyes of Argus were not always kept open; but they were never all cloſed. The whole body of a nation may be as jealous of liberties, as a private man of his honour. They may be, at all times, animated by a generous reſolution of defending theſe liberties at any riſk; as he may at all times feel in his heart the courage of venturing his life to maintain his honour. But as there is no neceſſary conſequence from this private character to that of a quarrelſome bully; ſo neither is there any neceſſary conſequence from the public character I have recommended to that of a factious, rebellious people.

"Liberty is a tender plant, which will not flouriſh unleſs the genius of the ſoil be proper for it; nor will any ſoil continue to be ſo long, which is not cultivated with inceſſant care. *Variæ illudunt peſtes*; miſchiefs of various kinds abound; and there is no ſeaſon, in the revolution of the great political year of government, when we can ſay, with truth, that liberty is entirely free from immediate, or remote danger.

"In every kind of government ſome powers muſt be lodged in particular men, or particular bodies of men, for the good order and preſervation of the whole community. The lines which circumſcribe the powers, are the bounds of ſeparation between the prerogatives of the prince, or other magiſtrate, and the privileges of the people. Every ſtep which the prince, or magiſtrate, makes beyond theſe bounds, is an encroachment on liberty, and every

every attempt towards making ſuch a ſtep is a danger to liberty

" Thus we ſee how great a truſt is repoſed in thoſe, to whom ſuch powers are committed; and if we look into the heart of man, we ſhall ſoon diſcover how great, though unavoidable, a temptation is laid in their way. The love of power is natural; it is inſatiable; almoſt conſtantly whetted, and never cloyed by poſſeſſion. If therefore all men will endeavour to encreaſe their power, or at leaſt to prolong and ſecure the enjoyment of it, according to the uncertain meaſure of their own paſſions, and not according to the ſtated proportion of reaſon and of law; and if neither one nor the other of theſe can be attempted without a danger to liberty; it follows undeniably that, in the nature of things, the notion of a perpetual danger to liberty is inſeparable from the very notion of government.

" That theſe principles are true, will appear evident from practice and experience, as well as ſpeculation. All forms of government ſuppoſe them to be ſo; and in ſuch as are not abſolute monarchies we find the utmoſt precautions, which their ſeveral inſtitutions admit, taken againſt this evil; from hence that rotation of employments in commonwealths; the annual, or other more frequent elections of magiſtrates; and all thoſe checks and controuls, which the wiſdom of legiſlators, prompted by experience, has invented.

" In perfect democracies theſe precautions have been taken in the higheſt degree; and yet even there they have not been always effectual. They were carried ſo far in the Athenian form of government, that

that this people seemed more in danger of falling into anarchy than tyranny; and yet one of their magistrates found means to become their tyrant, and to transmit this power to his successors.

"In mixed governments the danger must still be greater. Such a one we may justly reckon that of Rome, as well during the regal as the republican state: and surely no history can be more fruitful in examples of the danger to which liberty stands exposed from the natural, and therefore constant desire of amplifying and maintaining power, than the Roman history is, from the last of the kings to the first of the emperors.

"A monarchy, limited like ours, may be placed for aught I know, as it has often been represented, just in the middle point; from whence a deviation leads on one hand to tyranny, and, on the other to anarchy; but sure I am that, if we are situated just in the middle point, the least deviation is the more cautionally to be guarded against. Liberty would be safer, perhaps, if we inclined a little more than we do to the popular side.

"It may be said, and I would anticipate the objection, that if we are thus placed, our care ought to be exerted equally against deviations on either side; and that I am the more in the wrong to appear so apprehensive of those on one side, and so little apprehensive of those of the other; because even our own history might have shewn us that deviations to the popular side have cost us at least as dear, as ever those to the other side can be pretended to have done. But let it be considered;

"First, that as far as these national calamities, hinted at in the objection, have been the unavoid-

able

able conſequences of methods neceſſary to ſecure or retrieve liberty, it is infamous to repine at them, whatever they have coſt.

" Secondly, that the caſes compared together, and ſuppoſed in this objection to be equal, are not ſo. I may ſafely appeal to every impartial reader of our hiſtory, whether any truth he collected from it ever ſtruck him more ſtrongly than this; that when the diſputes between the King and the people have been carried to ſuch extremes, as to draw national calamities after them, it has not been owing primarily to the obſtinacy and weak management of the court, and is therefore unjuſtly charged on the juſt ſpirit of liberty. In truth, a ſpirit of liberty will never deſtroy a free conſtitution; a ſpirit of faction may. But I appeal again, whether thoſe of our princes, who have had ſenſe enough, and virtue enough, to encourage the one, have had any thing to fear from the other.

" Now if experience ſhews, as I am perſuaded it does, that the prerogative and power of a prince will never be in any real danger, when he invades neither openly nor inſidiouſly, the liberties of his people; the ſame experience will ſhow that the liberties of a people may be in very real danger, when, far from invading the prerogative and power of the prince, they ſubmit to one, and are even ſo good as to increaſe the other. The reaſon of this difference is plain A ſpirit of faction alone will be always too weak to cope with the legal power and authority of the crown; and the ſpirit of liberty, in the whole body of the people, which contradiſtinguiſhes this caſe from the other, may be raiſed by the fear of loſing; but cannot be ſo raiſed by the

the hopes of acquiring. The fear is common to all, the hope can only be particular to a few. The fear therefore may become a general principle of union; the hope cannot.

"But if a national ſpirit cannot be any other than a defenſive, and therefore unprovoked, an harmleſs, inoffenſive ſpirit; that of a prince cannot, without due coertion, be kept within the ſame bounds; for here the tables are turned; and the hope of acquiring, which can never be a common principle among the multitude to unite and carry them into action, becomes an almoſt irreſiſtable motive to the prince; who, by yielding to it, indulges the moſt powerful paſſions of the ſoul; who finds many to ſhare the difficulties and dangers of the enterprize with him; and who ſhares the prize with none.

"Generally and abſtractedly ſpeaking, therefore, as public liberty is more expoſed under mixed governments, than under perfect democracies; ſo it is more expoſed under limited monarchies, than under any other form of mixed government.

"What increaſes the danger to liberty in this caſe is, that the opportunity of invading it, which lies open to a ſovereign prince, ſuits almoſt any character. The powers intruſted to other magiſtrates, as in a commonwealth, are ſubject to immediate controuls; the exerciſe of them is ſubject to future reviſions, and is limited to a ſhort time; ſo that if ſuch magiſtrates invade liberty, with any proſpect of ſucceſs, it can only happen, when they are able to compenſate for the diſadvantages of their political circumſtances, by the greatneſs of their perſonal qualifications; by ſuperior underſtanding, and ſuperior courage; by a great, if not a good charac-

character; and by the appearance of virtue at leaſt. Few men, therefore, are fit for ſuch an undertaking.

"But the ſovereign prince, who rules in a limited monarchy, has an opportunity open to him for life; and ſuch an opportunity as requires no extraordinary perſonal qualifications. He may poſſeſs every vice, or weakneſs, which is oppoſed to the virtues or appearances of virtue, requiſite in the other caſe, and yet may deſtroy the liberty of the braveſt people upon earth. The pretences for concealing his deſigns, and the helps for carrying them on, which his ſituation affords above that of any magiſtrate in a commonwealth, will abundantly compenſate for the diſadvantages ariſing from his perſonal character, and will ſecure his ſucceſs, if the people are brought by artifice or accident, to grow remiſs in watching over their liberties. Every man is therefore fit for ſuch an undertaking. If theſe general reflections evince that liberty muſt always be in ſome degree of danger under every government; and that this danger muſt increaſe in proportion, as the chief powers of the ſtate are entruſted in fewer hands, and for longer terms; then liberty is always in ſome degree of danger; and that not the leaſt, even under our excellent conſtitution; then the neceſſity of keeping this jealous ſpirit, the true guardian of public liberty, always alive and active in this nation, is manifeſt; then the obſervation of our being fallen into the contrary temper, is alone a ſufficient reaſon to juſtify Mr. D'Anvers for joining his endeavours to awaken us from our political lethargy; then, Sir, my propoſition is proved, and your reaſoning falls to the ground."

This

PREFACE.

LOOSE papers reſemble the Sibyl's leaves; however oraculous their contents. Time, almoſt with a ſingle breath, ſunders them for ever; a fate which, perhaps, moſt modern productions deſerve, but what few authors can bear!

The letters that follow were, however, neither made public at firſt, nor collected now, as a trap for reputation; if they had, no doubt the writer would have put in his claim, as ſoon as the voice of the nation had declared in his favour. It is rather to be ſuppoſed they were occaſioned by a more extenſive and leſs pleaſing view, ariſing from a ſurvey of the dangerous deſigns of thoſe above, and the calamitous ſituation of thoſe below.

Had they had their full effect; had they taught one ſide that they could no otherwiſe diſarm oppoſition, than by approving themſelves in deed the friends and ſervants of the public; or the other that their ſtrength conſiſted in their unanimity, and their importance in their integrity; perhaps the author might have exclaimed with old Simeon, *Lord, now let thy ſervant depart in peace—for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*; and put a period to his labours.

But as neither of theſe neceſſary ends ſeems as yet to have been fully obtained; as the veſſel of our iniquities is not yet full; as power is ſtill warped to the prejudice of thoſe it was ordained to ſerve, and

oppoſition is like to continue as violent as ever; what was firſt fired occaſionally, as a beacon to give the alarm, muſt now be kept continually alight, that the danger may be always viſible, and that no direction may be wanting to thoſe, who would throw themſelves into the breach, with a firm reſolution to die or to ſubdue it.

If ever a teſt for the trial of ſpirits can be neceſſary, it is now; if ever thoſe of liberty and faction ought to be diſtinguiſhed from each other, it is now; if ever it is incumbent on the people to know what truth is, and to follow it, it is now.

Hitherto, perhaps, liberty, like oil hath only covered the ſurface, while the vinegar of faction hath corroded the conſtitution underneath, though good hath reſulted from both; for even faction muſt be at firſt popular, and popularity cannot be acquired without the evidence of ſome good deeds, which, like Abraham's faith, may hold the place of righteouſneſs.

There is a time when factions, by the vehemence of their own fermentation, ſtun and diſable one another; and this is the time when plain ſenſe, and downright honeſty, have the only chance to get uppermoſt, and introduce reformation.

Perhaps that time is now; perhaps party leaders of all kinds are equally in diſgrace; and the public may be grown wiſe enough to judge of the tree by its fruits.

The republication of theſe papers is therefore, at this time, moſt eſpecially ſeaſonable. If we do not take advantage of the ſtanding water of faction, the tide will ſoon turn one way or the other, and carry all before it; and this can be effected no way ſo happily

happily as by ſiding with ſuch, while ſuch are to be found, who appear to have been really inſpired with the genuine ſpirit of liberty; who have purged themſelves from the very ſuſpicion of ſiniſter views, by refuſing, at any price, to forego the noble cauſe they had eſpouſed, or give a ſanction to the ruin of their country.

Let but one great, brave, diſintereſted, active man ariſe, and he will be received, followed, and almoſt adored, as the guardian genius of theſe kingdoms. Without a foundation of ſolid virtue, and public ſpirit, the nobleſt accompliſhments loſe their importance; with it common ſenſe grows venerable, and the dove triumphs over the ſerpent.

If then there is any one man of ſufficient eminence among us, who, upon a thorough ſelf-examination, feels himſelf to be within this deſcription, let him ſtand forth; and, by a ſolemn, open, and explicit renunciation of all power, places, penſions, and every other ſpecies of court-merchandize, lay the ground-work for obtaining the confidence of the people; and, as far as honour and infamy can bind, give ſecurity for the religious obſervance of his engagement.

But if modeſty ſhould hinder what public neceſſity makes a duty, let this one man endeavour to inſpire a few more with the ſame generous ſentiments, and let them divide both the ſervice and the glory.

Glory, which, however decried and diſcountenanced of late, is the only thing worth the ambition of the great, and what the voice of the people only can beſtow!

POLITICS.

This diſcourſe furniſhed matter of much reflection to the company; ſome objections were made, ſome doubts were propoſed; and ſome explanations aſked for. I ſhall not trouble you with all theſe particulars, but ſhall conclude my letter by relating to you in what manner the old gentleman replied, and by his reply wound up the converſation of the evening.

"I believe, gentlemen, (ſaid he) that we do not differ ſo much as ſome of you ſeem to imagine; for, firſt, though I deſire the veſſel of the commonwealth may ſail ſafely, yet I deſire it may ſail ſmoothly too; and though I muſt think, till I hear better reaſons to the contrary, that public liberty cannot be ſo eaſily attacked, and may be more eaſily defended, in a perfect democracy, or in a mixed republic, than in a limited monarchy; yet will it not follow neceſſarily from hence, as has been ſuppoſed that I prefer the two firſt to the laſt of theſe forms of government. On either ſide there are compenſations; and if liberty may be better defended in the former, yet ſtill it may be defended, and domeſtic quiet is perhaps better preſerved in the latter.

"Secondly, if I agree with the gentlemen, who have inſiſted ſo much on the little reaſon which there was in the late reign, or is in the preſent, to apprehend any incroachments from the crown on the Britiſh liberties; theſe gentlemen muſt, I think, agree with me likewiſe, that this will not alter the caſe; ſubvert what I have endeavoured to eſtabliſh; or derive any blame on thoſe, who have endeavoured to revive that public ſpirit of watchfulneſs over all national intereſts, which is the proper and true

guardian of liberty, in an age when the public ſpirit has more than begun to ſink, and die away. I hope there will be always men found to preach this doctrine, in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, as the apoſtles preached the goſpel; becauſe if this ſpirit is not kept at all times in vigour, it may fail us at ſome particular time, when we ſhall want to exert it moſt. In great and immediate danger, the moſt ſluggiſh centinel is alert; but ſurely they, who, in times of apparent ſecurity, excite us to be upon our guard, do as real ſervice, as they who animate us to our defence, when we are actually attacked; and the firſt is, in my opinion, that kind of ſervice of which we ſtand the moſt in need. I confeſs freely that I ſhould not apprehend ſo much danger to liberty in times of ſuſpicion, if I ſaw that neither power could ſubdue, nor artifice divert, nor puſillanimity oblige men to abandon this ſpirit; as I ſhould apprehend in times of apparent ſecurity, if I obſerved it to be loſt. In a word, no laws, no orders of government, can effectually ſecure liberty any longer than this ſpirit prevails, and gives them vigour; and therefore you might argue as reaſonably for repealing any law, or aboliſhing any cuſtom, the moſt advantageous to liberty, and which you cannot be ſure of reſtoring at your pleaſure, becauſe you feel no immediate want of it; as you have argued for letting this ſpirit die away, which you cannot be ſure of reviving at your pleaſure, becauſe you perceive no immediate occaſion for the exerciſe of it.

"I hope that I have ſaid enough to give me a right to conclude in this manner; and if I was to deſcend into particular applications of the general truths,

truths, which I have advanced, I think that no doubt whatever could remain in any of your minds, upon this subject." After this our company broke up. If the same subject is resumed, when they meet again, or on any other, which I judge proper to be communicated to you, it is highly probable that you will hear again from,

Your admirer, friend

and servant, &c.

LETTER II.

SIR,

THE ſame company hath met, and the ſame ſubject hath been reſumed; ſo that I think myſelf under an obligation of writing to you again.

The perſon who gave occaſion to all that was ſaid in your defence the other day, ſeemed very deſirous that the converſation at our laſt meeting ſhould be purſued; and therefore as ſoon as we ſat down, he addreſſed himſelf thus to the old gentleman who had fought your battle.

"Sir, (ſaid he,) I own myſelf a good deal reconciled to the Craftſman by the diſcourſe you held, when we were laſt together. That ſome inconveniencies muſt follow from keeping this ſpirit of jealouſy and watchfulneſs alive, ſeems to me very evident; but I begin to think that this evil may be neceſſary, in order to ſecure us againſt greater. Every ſyſtem of human invention muſt be liable to ſome objections; and it would be chimerical in us to expect a form of government liable to none. Even theocracy was attended by ſome real inconveniencies, according to the Jewiſh hiſtories; and neither the Divine Preſence in the tabernacle, nor the ambulant Oracle, which the prieſt carried about with him, could preſerve intire purity in religion, or good order in the ſtate. We muſt be content therefore to bear the diſorder I apprehend from that ferment, which

which a perpetual jealouſy of the governors in the governed will keep up rather than abandon that ſpirit, the life of which is the life of liberty. When the jealouſy happens to be ill placed, we may hope it will not riſe to any great and dangerous height. When it happens to be well grounded, it may have the good effect of deſtroying a wicked miniſter, of checking a bad, or of reclaiming a miſguided prince.

" You ſee, Sir, that my converſion is pretty far advanced; and if you will pleaſe to deſcend into particular applications of the general doctrines you delivered, as you gave us reaſon to hope that you would, it is very probable that the few doubts I have ſtill may be removed."

The reſt of the company ſeconded this requeſt. The good old gentleman yielded to our common deſires, and ſpake to the following effect:

" The general truth I am to prove by particular examples is this; that liberty cannot be preſerved long by any people, who do not preſerve that watchful and jealous ſpirit of liberty, on the neceſſity of which I have inſiſted. If you are once convinced of this truth, you will know what opinion to entertain of thoſe, who endeavour to extinguiſh this ſpirit, and of thoſe who do all they can to keep it alive.

" There are two other general truths relative to this, which I ſhall eſtabliſh likewiſe by particular examples, as I go along.

" One is this; that the ſpirit of liberty, far from inſpiring that raſhneſs and undiſtinguiſhing fury, which are peculiar to the ſpirit of faction, is ſlow to act even againſt the worſt princes, and exerts it-

ſelf in favour of the beſt with more effect than any other ſpirit whatever.

" The ſecond is this; that how ſlowly ſoever the ſpirit of liberty may act in ſuſpicious times, and againſt incroaching governors; yet if it be kept alive, it will act effectually ſooner or later, though under the greateſt diſadvantages, and againſt the moſt powerful oppoſition; in a word, in the moſt deſperate caſes.

" The firſt of theſe truths will recommend this ſpirit to every good prince and honeſt miniſter. The other will encourage every man, who is a friend to liberty, never to abandon the cauſe through deſpondency of ſucceſs, as long as he ſees this ſpirit prevail, or even ſubſiſt.

" Having fixed theſe principal points of view, let us proceed; and though I would not adviſe you to admit the works of Machiavel into your canon of political writings; yet ſince in them, as in other apocryphal books, many excellent things are interſperſed, let us begin by improving an hint taken from the diſcourſes of the Italian ſecretary on the firſt decade of Livy.

" He obſerves, that of all governments, thoſe are the beſt, which, by the natural effect of their original conſtitutions, are frequently renewed or drawn back, as he explains his meaning, to their firſt principles; and that no government can be of long duration, where this does not happen from time to time, either from the cauſe juſt mentioned, or from ſome accidental cauſe.

" The reaſon is obvious. There muſt be ſome good in the firſt principles of every government, or

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it could not ſubſiſt at all; much leſs could it make any progreſs. But this good degenerates, according to the natural courſe of things; and governments, like all other mixed bodies, tend to diſſolution by the changes which are wrought in the ſeveral parts, and by the unaptneſs and diſproportion which reſult from hence, throughout the whole compoſition.

"The moſt effectual, and indeed the ſole method of maintaining their health and prolonging their life, muſt therefore be to bring them back as near and as frequently as poſſible to thoſe principles, on which their proſperity, ſtrength and duration were originally founded.

"This change, or renewal of the ſtate, hath been ſometimes wrought by external cauſes, as it happened at Rome upon the invaſion of the Gauls. The Romans had departed from their ancient obſervances. The ceremonies of religion and the laws of juſtice were neglected by them. An enemy whom they deſpiſed and provoked, conquered them. The impreſſions made by this dreadful calamity brought them back to their firſt inſtitutions, and to their primitive ſpirit. They ſprung up from this ſecond original, as Livy calls it, with new vigour, and roſe to greater fame, power, and dignity than ever.

"But not to dwell on ſuch examples, as point out to us rather the puniſhment of vice, than the means of reformation, let us obſerve that this change or renewal of the ſtate, is oftener and better wrought by internal cauſes.

"Many excellent inſtitutions were contrived in framing the Roman government, which ſerved to maintain in force, the firſt principles of that political ſyſtem. Such were the regulations about elections;

tions; the laws againſt bribery; and many other written laws, or confirmed cuſtoms. Such again was the conſtitution of the ſenate, in whom the majeſty of the commonwealth reſided, and whoſe authority controuled the licentiouſneſs of the people. Such was the erection of that ſacred tribunitial power, whoſe prerogatives ſerved to check the uſurpations of the magiſtrates, and who could arreſt, with one word, even the proceedings of the ſenate. Such was the office of the cenſors, whoſe inquiſitions and luſtrations corrected abuſes, reformed manners, and purged the ſenate itſelf of corrupt and unworthy members.

"These laws, theſe cuſtoms, theſe different orders, controuling one another, and promoting the general good of the commonwealth, had great effect, during ſome centuries. But this effect could never have followed them all, if the ſpirit of liberty, which had enacted theſe laws, eſtabliſhed theſe cuſtoms, and formed theſe orders, had not continued. The very beſt laws are a dead letter, nay often a grievance, unleſs they are ſtrenuouſly and honeſtly executed. They never can be ſo executed, unleſs the ſpirit of them poſſeſs thoſe, to whom the execution of them is committed; and it would be ridiculous to expect to find this ſpirit in the magiſtrates, and the ſeveral orders of the ſtate, unleſs it appeared in the body of the people, out of whom theſe magiſtrates are choſen, and theſe orders compoſed.

"The examples which Machiavel cites, to ſhew that the virtue of particular men among the Romans did frequently draw that government back to its original principles, are ſo many proofs that the duration of liberty depends on keeping the ſpirit of

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it alive and warm. Such examples were frequent in Rome, whilſt this ſpirit flouriſhed. As it decayed, theſe examples became more rare, and failed at laſt entirely. The old laws and cuſtoms were, for the moſt part, ſtill in being. The forms of electing magiſtrates, and of promulgating laws were, in the main, obſerved. There was ſtill a ſenate. There were ſtill cenſors and tribunes. But the ſpirit of liberty being ſtifled by that of faction and cabal; and the ſeveral orders of the government being tainted by the general corruption; theſe good laws and cuſtoms remained without force; or were ſuſpended; or were abrogated; or were perverted to ſerve the purpoſes of private ambition and avarice.

"The time-ſerving flatterers of princes and miniſters have no point, amongſt all the nauſeous drudgery impoſed on them, which they are obliged more to labour than that of repreſenting all the effects of a ſpirit of liberty as ſo many effects of a ſpirit of faction. Examples might be found, even without ſearching long, or looking far after them, when this hath been done againſt the public ſenſe of a whole nation, and ſometimes in favour of a cabal, neither numerous nor conſiderable enough to be called a party. But ſtill it will remain eternally true, that the ſpirit of liberty and the ſpirit of faction are not only different, but repugnant and incompatible; ſo that the life of either is the death of the other.

"We muſt not imagine that the freedom of the Romans was loſt, becauſe one party fought for the maintenance of liberty; another for the eſtabliſhment of tyranny; and that the latter prevailed. No!

No! The ſpirit of liberty was dead, and the ſpirit of faction had taken its place on both ſides. As long as the former prevailed, a Roman ſacrificed his own, and therefore no doubt every other perſonal intereſt, to the intereſt of the commonwealth. When the latter ſucceeded, the intereſt of the commonwealth was conſidered no otherwiſe than in ſubordination to that particular intereſt, which each perſon had eſpouſed. The principal men, inſtead of making their grandeur and glory conſiſt, as they formerly had done, in that which the grandeur and glory of the commonwealth reflected on them, conſidered themſelves now as individuals, not as citizens, and each would ſhine with his own light. To this purpoſe alone they employed the commands they had of armies, the governments of provinces, and the influence they acquired over the tribes at Rome, and over the allies and ſubjects of the republic. Upon principles of the ſame kind, inferior perſons attached themſelves to theſe; and that zeal and induſtry, nay, that courage and magnanimity, which had been exerted formerly, in the ſervice of the commonwealth, were exerted by the ſpirit of faction, for Marius or Sylla; for Cæſar, or Pompey.

"It is plain that the liberty of Rome would not have been irretrievably loſt, though Cæſar had finiſhed the civil war with abſolute ſucceſs, and was ſettled in power, if the ſpirit of liberty had not been then loſt in the whole body of the people; if the Romans had not been as ripe for ſlavery, as the Cappadocians were fond of it; for I think the Cappadocians were the people, who deſired that a prince might be ſet over them, and refuſed to be a free people.

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" I cannot believe that thoſe, who murdered Cæſar, took ſuch puerile meaſures as Cicero, who was not let into the ſecret, pretended that they had taken, when he ſaw the conſequences of their action. But in this they erred. They killed their benefactor; at leaſt, he was ſuch to the greateſt part of them; and renewed the civil war, in order to reſtore liberty to a people, who had loſt the ſpirit of liberty, and who would not take it, when it was offered to them. Even in the ſenate Octavius had a party; Anthony had a party; but the commonwealth had none. In ſhort, the freeſt people upon earth, by ſuffering the ſpirit of liberty to decay, and that of faction to grow up, became ſlaves to ſuch a ſucceſſion of monſters, (continued with very few exceptions, from the reign of Auguſtus to the deſtruction of the empire) as God never ſent in his wrath to execute vengeance on any other nation.

" Thus I have endeavoured to illuſtrate and confirm the firſt general propoſition laid down by a ſummary application of it to the Roman hiſtory. I have not explained by what degrees, and by what means one of theſe ſpirits gradually decayed, and the other grew up. The ſubject is fine, and the taſk would be pleaſant; but it is unneceſſary to our preſent purpoſe. We ſee enough at this time, if we ſee that, in the greateſt revolution of the greateſt government of the world, loſing the ſpirit of liberty was the cauſe, and loſing liberty was the effect.

" If now we bring theſe conſiderations home, we ſhall find not only the firſt general propoſition, but the others relative to it, illuſtrated and confirmed through the whole courſe of our annals. I ſhall make

make a deduction of ſome of theſe particulars. To deduce them all would exceed my ſtrength, and your patience."

Here one of our company interrupted the old gentleman's diſcourſe, by ſaying that ſince we were come to a kind of pauſe, he deſired leave to make an obſervation, which he thought pertinent and material, on what had been ſaid, before we went into any new matter. "The difference and oppoſition between a ſpirit of liberty and a ſpirit of faction, continued he, hath been juſtly ſtated. A ſpirit of liberty will be always and wholly concerned about national intereſts, and very indifferent about perſonal and private intereſts. On the contrary, a ſpirit of faction will be always and wholly concerned about theſe, and very indifferent about the others. When they appear therefore in their proper characters, they are diſtinguiſhed as eaſily as light and darkneſs; and the danger I apprehend is over.

"But faction puts on the maſque of liberty; and, under this falſe appearance, diſputes her being, even with liberty herſelf. Now here, methinks, a great many dangers ariſe; the danger of miſtaking, when it is ſo hard to diſtinguiſh; the danger of being bubbles and tools of faction, whilſt we fancy ourſelves aſſertors of public liberty; the danger of continuing under this deluſion, till it is too late to prevent ſuch miſchiefs as we never intended to bring on our country. The ſpirit of faction may take (and, I doubt not, hath often taken) poſſeſſion of numbers, who meant to entertain no other ſpirit than that of liberty; for numbers have not the diſcernment of ſpirits. This poſſeſſion may continue, and

and, in fact, I believe it hath continued very often, till faction hath accompliſhed, or ſecured the accompliſhment of her ends. I made this obſervation, which reſults naturally from what hath been ſaid, and inſiſt upon it, becauſe if faction could not lie latent under the moſt ſpecious and popular pretences imaginable, there would be no great need of putting us on our guard againſt it; and becauſe if it can lie thus latent and concealed, we may be expoſed to the dangers I have mentioned, which ſide ſoever of the queſtion we take in political diſputes. At this time, to ſpeak as I think, the caſe is ſo clear on one ſide, that no man, who adheres to it, hath the leaſt pretence left him to ſay that he purſues the public intereſt; or is directed in his conduct by the generous, diſintereſted ſpirit of liberty.

"I could ſupport my aſſertion by many proofs, if it was neceſſary in this company. One I will mention for its ſingularity; and it is this.

"We have ſeen and heard in a nation, hitherto free, ſuch maxims avowed and pleaded for, as are inconſiſtent with all the notions of liberty. Corruption hath been defended, nay recommended, as a proper, a neceſſary, and therefore a reaſonable expedient of government; than which there is not, perhaps, any one propoſition more repugnant to the common ſenſe of mankind and to univerſal experience. Both of theſe demonſtrate corruption to be the laſt deadly ſymptom of agoniſing liberty. Both of them declare, that a people abandoned to it, are abandoned to a reprobate ſenſe, and are loſt to all hopes of political ſalvation.

"The dependence of the legiſlative on the executive power hath been contended for by the ſame

perſons, under the ſame direction; and yet nothing ſurely can be more evident than this, that, in a conſtitution like ours, the ſafety of the whole depends on the balance of the parts, and the balance of the parts on the mutual independency on one another; agreeably to which Thuanus makes Ferdinand ſay, in anſwer to the Caſtilians, who preſſed him to take away the independency of the ſtates of Arragon; '*Equilibrio potentiæ regni regiſque ſalutem publicam* '*contineri; et ſi contingeret aliquando alterum alteri* '*præponderare, proculdubio alterius aut utriuſque rui-*'*nam ex eo ſecuturam*; that the public ſafety de-'pends on the equal balance of the power of the 'king, and of the power of the kingdom; and 'that if ever it ſhould happen that one outweighed 'the other, the ruin of one, or of both, muſt un-'doubtedly follow.'

"On one ſide then the maſk is pulled off. The weak may be ſeduced to concur; the ſtrongeſt may be forced to ſubmit; but no man can be any longer deceived.

"On the other, it muſt be acknowledged that the appearances are extremely fair. True notions of liberty and good government are profeſſed and purſued. Our grievances are complained of; our dangers are foretold; not only thoſe which all men feel or ſee, but thoſe which are more remote from obſervation. In ſhort, the ſpirit of liberty, ſuch as it hath been deſcribed, ſeems to breathe from this quarter, and to diffuſe its influences over the nation.

"As I am a lover of my country and of liberty, I have rejoiced in this. I rejoice in it ſtill; and yet I confeſs freely that I took ſome umbrage at a paper

per which came out not long ago. The design and tendency of it seemed to me to favour the cause of a faction; and of a faction, however contemptible in its present state, always to be guarded against. The paper I mean is Fog's Journal of the 6th of June; where you have seen a ridiculous speech, supposed to be made by General Monk, and translated, as the author says, from Leti's history of Oliver Cromwell.

"If this wretched production had appeared in Mist's Journal, I should have felt neither surprise nor concern. That writer never wore so much as the mask of liberty; and shewed his game so plainly, that whatever he got by faction, faction could get nothing by him. But Fog, who writes incomparably better, hath appeared to write with a much better design. Those who are warmest in the national interest, without regard to persons, and independently of all factions, have made this judgement of him; and therefore I was surprised and concerned to find that he exposed himself, even once, or in any degree, to the same reproach as was frequently and justly made to his predecessor."

The gentleman's observation gave occasion to much discourse. Our old sage desired it might be remembered that he had not undertaken the defence of every weekly writer, though he had undertaken yours, Mr. D'Anvers. "The paper, continued he, which hath been so much mentioned, is a very silly paper, to whatever purpose it was designed.

"If it was designed to inspire an horror of those miseries from which the Restoration delivered the nation, it was a very superfluous work at this time,

when there is no real, or pretended difference of opinion upon that head amongſt us. Thoſe who do not go to church upon the 29th of May, nor on any other day, will agree with thoſe who do in this point, upon better authority than that of Leti, and for better reaſons than thoſe which are contained in the fooliſh declamation attributed to Monk.

" If it was deſigned to make us commemorate the reſtoration of the two brothers, Charles and James, as a national bleſſing in itſelf, and independently of the other conſideration, the project was equally ridiculous. The flattery beſtowed upon theſe princes, whilſt they were in exile, might paſs, and many things concurred to make it paſs. But to talk in the ſame ſtile to mankind at this time, when they have both ſat on our throne; when ſo many of us remember both what they did, and what they would have done, is contemptible to the laſt degree.

" If it was deſigned for more modern application, and to raiſe a ſpirit amongſt us in favour of the Pretender, the project was too fooliſh to have been hatched at home. It muſt have been imported from abroad. What Jacobite can be ſanguine enough to hope that his cauſe ſhould revive, when he beholds the heroical King and Queen, who fill our throne, auſpicious parents of a numerous progeny of young heroes and heroines, riſing up to emulate their virtues, and to gladden, like them, the Britiſh nation?

" This ſingle conſideration might be ſufficient to damp the hopes of any Jacobite who lives at home, and is a witneſs of all this glory. But however I ſhall mention another, which ought to have its weight

weight likewiſe, and which will have more perhaps amongſt ſome people. The ſpirit of Jacobitiſm is not only gone, but it will appear to be gone in ſuch a manner as to leave no room to apprehend its return; if we reflect that it hath died away, whilſt all that could be done to keep it alive was doing by thoſe who profeſſed it, and by thoſe who valued and recommended themſelves on their oppoſition to all the effects of it; if we conſider the numbers of people who have abandoned this intereſt, notwithſtanding the utmoſt provocations to the contrary.

"In ſhort, I perſuade myſelf that if the Pretender had no rival in the throne, inſtead of having there one ſo formidable as our moſt auguſt Monarch; yet his way to the throne would not be more open to him. The whole bulk of the people hath been brought, by the Revolution, and by preſent ſettlement of the crown, to entertain principles which very few of us defended in my younger days. The ſafety and welfare of the nation are now the firſt and principle objects of regard. The regard to perſons and to families hath been reduced to the ſecond place; and it holds even but that under the direction of the former. Can any man believe that a people brave enough to diſpoſe of their crown for the greateſt national advantage, even when the throne was full, will ever diſpoſe of it as long as the ſpirit of liberty remains amongſt them, for the greateſt national miſchief, if the throne ſhould be empty?

"There is but one deſign more, which I can conceive to have given occaſion to this ſilly paper; but one quarter more from which it could poſſibly come; and theſe gueſſes, perhaps, will not ap-

pear the leaſt probable. Might it not be deſigned to inſtil a jealouſy of Jacobitiſm, and to prejudice mankind againſt all writings which thoſe, who are offended at them, cannot anſwer? Might it not be deſigned to furniſh the ſpruce, pert orator, who ſtrewed ſome of his flowers in the Daily Courant of the 11th of June, with an hint, which he hath moſt happily and modeſtly improved? *Fog, ſays he, avows Jacobitiſm; the Craftſman concurs in the ſame deſign; nay, every Jacobite in England ſinks his maſter's divine right in the popular topics of debts, taxes, and corruption*; ſo that Jacobitiſm may now be imputed, upon this authority, to ninety-nine in a hundred of the whole nation; for ninety-nine in an hundred do complain of debts, taxes, and corruption. I am ſure there is arrogance and impertinence both, in ſuch an inſinuation, too groſs to be denied; whereas the Craftſman may deſtroy the whole proof brought againſt him, of arrogance by anſwering three ſilly queſtions in the negative.

"If this was the deſign, I will be bold, for bold it may juſtly ſeem, to ſay, that this expedient is at leaſt as bungling, and likely to prove as ineffectual, as any that have been produced by the ſame great genius who contrived it; for if we were inclined to believe that the Craftſman, Fog, or any other perſon, carries on the meaſures of faction under the maſk of liberty; ſhould we believe it on the credit of thoſe who oppoſe them, and who are notoriouſly influenced to write (though under ſpecious pretences of promoting loyalty to the King, and an acquieſcence in his Majeſty's meaſures yet in reality) for no other ſervice than that of a ſmall number of men; nay, ſtrictly ſpeaking, of a ſingle man? With what face

can

can ſuch writers impute faction to any one living or dead?

" Let them be aſſured, that we can examine and judge for ourſelves; and that neither the Craftſman nor Fog would be able, if they went about it, to impoſe upon us, any more than they themſelves have been able to do.

" The pretty author I juſt now mentioned begins his eſſay with airs of wit, and ends it with airs of wiſdom. What pity is it that he ſhould ſucceed in neither? In his firſt paragraph he repreſents the Craftſman with curious impropriety as a magician, who conjures up ſpirits; as a dog, who barks at a diſtance; as a little inſect, who nibbles at a character; and my friend Caleb was all theſe things, it ſeems, at the ſame inſtant. After this ſpecimen of writing, we may expect to ſee him compared, in ſome other production of the ſame author, to a bird, and made to fly different ways and in different places at once.

" But let us leave the wit, and come to the wiſdom; which will bring us back to our ſubject.

" In the laſt paragraph of this elaborate piece, the author ſets the example of my Lord Falkland and others before our eyes; who ſtrengthened, as he ſays, the republican party ſo long, *that when they found out their deſigns, and forſook them, it was too late to prevent them.* After this, he calls moſt charitably on ſeveral well-meaning perſons to take warning; for ſome, whom he allows to be ſuch, he thinks in danger of being drawn in to favour the purpoſes of thoſe whom he calls oppoſers of our government.

" Behold this little Gamaliel in Cathedra! Obſerve the ſcholars he places at his feet for inſtruction!

tion! *Risum teneatis amici?* Can the graveſt of you forbear laughter?

"When we come to apply the general propoſitions laid down ſtill more particularly to the Engliſh, than we have done to the Roman hiſtory, I ſhall ſhew you perhaps that this author, like moſt other fine men, treaſures up in his memory the obſervations he meets with in hiſtory, inſtead of making his own upon the examination and compariſon of the facts and characters he finds there; and that the example he hath choſen will come out againſt the very purpoſe he hath applied it to. In the mean time let us obſerve, that the alarm which hath been taken by ſome of this company, and I ſuppoſe by others, at the publication of that ſtupid paper in Fog's Journal, ſhews how little reaſon there is to apprehend, that thoſe who are actuated by the ſpirit of liberty, and purſue the national intereſt, ſhould be impoſed upon by the ſpirit of any faction.

"The ſpirit of liberty is a jealous ſpirit; and faction is equally the object of its jealouſy, whether the views of faction be directed in favour of the crown, or againſt it. I make this diſtinction here, though I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak more fully upon it hereafter, becauſe I perceive that we are apt to confine our idea of faction to ſuch men and ſuch meaſures as are in oppoſition to the men in power, and to the meaſures they take; whereas in truth, a number of men in power who exerciſe it ſolely for their own private advantage and ſecurity, and who treat the nation as their farm, or rather as a country under contribution to them, (let them ſhelter themſelves under what authority they pleaſe), are as much a faction as any number of men, who under

popular

popular pretences endeavour to ruin, or at leaſt to diſturb the government, that they may raiſe themſelves.

" If the ſpirit of liberty were extinguiſhed, as it is diſcouraged, the ſpirit of ſome faction or other would, no doubt, prevail; but this would not ſucceed under the maſk of liberty. There would be in ſuch a caſe no need of wearing this diſguiſe. Men would avow faction. They would chuſe that which ſuited their intereſt beſt; and indeed it would be of no great moment which they choſe.

" But if the ſpirit of liberty, which begins to revive in this country, becomes prevalent, there will remain nothing to fear from any faction whatever, whether maſked or unmaſked. Whilſt it is maſked, and the inſtruments or members of it purſue the national intereſt, though they intend another, the bad principle is however ſo far productive of good, and the cauſe of virtue is ſo far promoted by vice itſelf. When it comes to be unmaſked, and the inſtruments or members of it are hurried by indiſcretion, or forced by the courſe of events, as they muſt be, to ſhew their game, faction is that moment diſarmed. The diſtinction marked, the ſeparation follows of courſe; and thoſe who eſpouſe the cauſe of the nation, will find themſelves doubly ſtrengthened, by the aſſiſtance which faction gave them at one time, and by the oppoſition ſhe makes to them at another. In ſhort, gentlemen, the ſpirit of Jacobitiſm may crawl about and ſkulk in corners: The ſpirit of the other faction may roll in gilded ſpires, and with erected creſts, in every public place, and hiſs and threaten, and caſt its venom around; but the ſpirit of liberty, like the divine rod of Aaron, will devour all the ſerpents of the magicians.

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"I see therefore no cause to fear that we may be drawn in to serve the purposes of faction, whilst we pursue the cause of liberty; and if we suffer ourselves to be drawn off from this pursuit by the jealousy which one faction endeavours to give us of another, we should be arrant bubbles indeed. Fog is not to be defended for publishing a paper liable every way to blame, and capable of no excuse; but if he hath hurt any body by it, he hath hurt himself; and the weight which is laid upon it by those on one side, (who perhaps writ it,) is as ridiculous as the project of those who thought to advance the Jacobite cause by it, if it came from that side."

Here the old gentleman broke off, and though he was prefsed to resume the discourse he had begun when this interruption happened, he desired to be excused, because it was late, and promised to comply with our request upon some other occasion. If he keeps his word, as I am persuaded he will, you shall hear again from,

Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER III.

SIR,

OUR old gentleman having kept his word with the company, I deſigned to have kept mine with you; but ſome buſineſs calling me into the country, I ſend you a few minutes of the converſations which have paſſed, in hopes that the ſubject will not be left imperfect for as long a time as my affairs may oblige me to be abſent. Throw theſe minutes into what form, and make what uſe of them you pleaſe. They are deſigned to ſerve an honeſt cauſe; the cauſe of truth and of liberty. You have eſpouſed it; and I hope will purſue it.

You are able to do this with ſucceſs, even in oppoſition to the moſt plauſible writers; and how much more againſt the curſory Obſervator who appeared in the Daily Courant and the London Journaliſt?

I do not ſuppoſe you will think it worth your while to ſet ſeriouſly about anſwering them; but it may be worth while, now and then, to ſhew them how little they deſerve to be anſwered.

They complain heavily of the prolixity and dulneſs of the letters which you have publiſhed. Might they not be taught, what they have already taught the world, that an eſſay of two or three columns may be longer than an eſſay of five or ſix? Let them not carp at my words, ſince they cannot miſtake my meaning.

Might they not be convinced, that they are the leaſt

leaſt competent judges in the whole nation of the dulneſs of others; for this plain reaſon, that it is not in the caſe of dulneſs, as it is in that of wit and learning; in which he is the beſt judge of theſe qualities in others, who poſſeſſes them himſelf in the moſt eminent degree?

But there is a judge before whom all productions of this ſort are tried, and by whoſe ſentence alone they muſt ſtand or fall. This judge is the public; and I am apt to think, that theſe authors may be informed of the ſentence pronounced by the public on your papers, Mr. D'Anvers, and on their own, if they will take the trouble to enquire of Meſſieurs Roberts, Peele, and Franklin.

I am even inclined to believe that they have enquired; and that, deſpairing of ſucceſs before this tribunal, they have appealed to another; where thoſe whom the public rejects are pretty ſure of being received

Sure I am that they cannot hope to ſucceed any where elſe, whilſt they found their merit on Billingſgate, falſe quotations, groſs miſrepreſentations, and an eternal begging of the queſtion.

That they are guilty of all theſe may be ſoon proved. I will point out ſome inſtances; as many as the haſte I am in allows me time to mention.

The curſory Obſervator accuſes you and me (for theſe writers are pleaſed to ſuppoſe us to be the ſame perſon who correſponds with himſelf) of quoting falſely, and applying fooliſhly in every caſe, whilſt he quotes falſely himſelf, and ridicules the applications of what it is manifeſt he never read. His whole charge is built on a lye and a blunder.

Machiavel is made, according to him, in one of my

my letters, to ſuppoſe that the firſt deſtruction of Rome by the Gauls (and I never heard of a ſecond) was a judgment from heaven on the people, for their having departed from their ancient obſervances and religious ceremonies. With this he makes himſelf wonderfully merry; and having heard that Machiavel did not paſs for a very ſtrong believer, he ridicules the imputation of ſuch a ſuppoſition to that great politician.

But let this ſcribbler learn to read, before he blots any more paper. Let him learn to ſpeak of what is, or is not in books, after he hath looked into thoſe books, and not from his idle imagination of what an author would or would not have ſaid, agreeably to the character of the author, which his ignorance hath taken upon truſt.

My old gentleman never ſaid, that Machiavel ſuppoſed the deſtruction of Rome by the Gauls was a judgment from heaven; but he reckoned amongſt other particulars in which the Romans had begun to degenerate, and to which they were brought back by this great misfortune, that of neglecting the ceremonies of religion and the laws of juſtice. Now Machiavel does ſay this in expreſs and ſtrong terms, as this writer would have known, if he had conſulted the firſt chapter of the third book of his diſcourſes on Livy.

But I will tell him ſomething more. This very Machiavel hath written a whole chapter concerning the* religion of the Romans; in which he mentions, that Rome was more obliged to Numa than to Romulus; in which he ſhews that her grandeur and felicity were owing to her religion; nay, he aſſerts in general, that as religion raiſes common-

* Lib. i. cap. 11.

wealths, ſo the contempt of it muſt ruin them. Good God! is this talking like Machiavel? Why truly it is thus that Machiavel talks; and in talking thus he ſhews more learning and ſenſe than the Obſervator is maſter of.

Caſt your eye, Mr. D'Anvers on the next paragraph; in which this able perſon undertakes to prove from reaſon, as well as hiſtory, a matter of fact. The fact is this; that the deſtruction of Rome by the Gauls, was owing to the oppoſition ſet on foot to the meaſures and perſon of the great and much injured Camillus.

It was a great miſtake, it ſeems, to mention this incident in the Roman hiſtory, in one of my letters. The Obſervator ſhall find that it was a greater blunder in him to dwell upon it.

He knows as little of Livy as he does of Machiavel, or I believe of any other good author. Let him turn to the Roman hiſtorian. He will find that Livy, in the tranſition which he makes from the proſecution of Camillus to the invaſion of the Gauls, ſays, "that if there be any thing certain in "human affairs, Rome could not have been taken "if that citizen had remained in it." But does he attribute the invaſion of the Gauls to this man's baniſhment? No. He attributes it to the conduct of three raſh and fooliſh brothers who were ſent ambaſſadors to the Gauls, and who, by breaking the law of nations, juſtly provoked this people. He attributes it to the force of a faction which prevailed to ſcreen theſe criminals, and expoſed the ſtate to ruin, rather than give them up to juſtice.

Thus the fact ſtands in hiſtory. Let the Obſervator now conſider, whether it would be very difficult

cult to make certain applications of it which he would not like. I doubt theſe applications would appear much more appoſite than that which is ſaid to be intended in his paper, of the character of the great and much injured Camillus.

He ſucceeds, you ſee, but ill, when he meddles with facts; and I do not find that he pretends much to reaſon. The reſt of his paper contains little more than fool, knave, libeller, incendiary, &c. I ſhall therefore take notice of but one thing more; and that is the advantage he would make of a miſtake in printing.

He muſt have perceived, or he can perceive nothing, that it was a miſtake in printing. If the meaning of my letter had been, that the Craftſman might deſtroy the whole proof of arrogance brought againſt him, by anſwering in the negative all the queſtions aſked in the paragraph referred to, it ſhould have been ſaid *five* ſilly queſtions; for they are five not four; but the truth is, that no regard was had to the two introductory queſtions; and that the three main queſtions which follow were alone meant. A writer muſt be reduced very low by his cauſe, or be very low in his character, who catches at ſuch an impertinent opportunity of being what he imagines ſmart.

I ſhould ſay a word or two to the profound Mr. Oſborne, who hath been pleaſed to let us know, that he prefers the abſolute monarchy of Auguſtus to the free ſtate of the Roman commonwealth. He prefers likewiſe, I ſuppoſe, (at leaſt his diſcourſe leads one to think ſo), the violence, the treachery, and the bloody maſſacres, on which this abſolute monarchy was founded, to the civil diſorders which were occaſioned by eſtabliſhing and maintaining an

equal commonwealth. I ſhould deſire him to compare the reigns of a Caligula, a Nero, a Domitian, a Heliogabulus, (which had never happened if the uſurpation of Auguſtus had never happened), with the glorious fourth and fifth centuries of the republic of Rome; but I have not at preſent time for this. I hope you, Mr. D'Anvers, will give ſome ſalutary correction at your leiſure, and make him aſhamed of having prophaned the language of a free people in ſo proſtitute a manner, and to ſuch ſlaviſh purpoſes! Adviſe him to learn better notions of government from Mr. Gordon's excellent diſcourſes, prefixed to his tranſlation of Tacitus; in which he will find his favourite Auguſtus ſet in a true light, and proved to be an infamous tyrant, though ſomewhat more artful than his ſucceſſors. He muſt certainly acknowledge the obligation; ſince you cannot be ſuſpected of doing it on any account but that of a charitable diſpoſition towards him. If he was capable of impoſing on the dulleſt Quidnunc in any coffeehouſe, or of ſeducing the moſt raw boy that ever eloped from ſchool, you might be ſuſpected of ſome farther and deeper deſign; but when you write againſt ſo harmleſs a creature, your efforts muſt paſs, and ought to paſs, for the pure effects of the moſt diſintereſted, the moſt refined charity.

Let me only aſk the favour of you to touch three points, amongſt others, whenever you condeſcend to meddle with ſquire Oſborne. One is to aſſure him, in my name, (and, if you pleaſe, in your own), that a good miniſter ought not to be abuſed; nay more, that he who abuſes him is a rogue, a raſcal, and an impudent (I had almoſt ſaid, for I conform to his dialect, a traiterous) fellow; and might have juſtified myſelf by the authority of a writer on Mr. Oſborne's

Osborne's side, who talked of allegiance to ministers; but let this important author know, at the same time, that we defy him to make the least use of these concessions against any one sentence, any one word, in any Craftsmen that hath been published.

There are two other things, of which I desire you likewise to take notice. One is scandalously impudent; the other infamously unfair.

When his patron is commended by any honest man in Britain, it is done most certainly with a sneer. The great man is an expression which hath undoubtedly occasioned more sneers than this nation hath seen in a century before; but it is saucy and impudent in Mr. Osborne to suppose, that one who speaks of the King and Royal Family, with all the respect that is due to them, means a sneer.

The other thing which I desire you to take some notice of, is the malicious and mean comment made on an expression in my last letter to you, where I called his present Majesty a formidable rival of the Pretender. Mr. Osborne is pleased, out of the abundance of his loyalty, to resent this as an insult on the King. Now though, in strictness of fact and propriety of language, his Majesty neither is a rival to any body, nor can have a rival, being our rightful and lawful King, by the consent of his people in parliament; (the only good title to the crown of these realms;) yet in pretension there is a rivalry; and I may defy Mr. Osborne to give any other reason for keeping up so large an army in times of peace.

You will observe, Mr. D'Anvers, that the only design of this letter is to make some short observa-

tions on two filly papers, which have been publiſhed againſt my former letters to you. You are now deſired to apply the old gentleman's general poſitions to the Engliſh hiſtory, from the minutes which I have ſent you, and which I believe will be as agreeable to the public, as it was to the company in which he delivered it.

I am, Sir,

Your friend and reader, &c.

REMARKS

REMARKS

ON THE

HISTORY of ENGLAND.

LETTER IV.

FEW nations have gone through more revolutions, few governments have appeared more unſteady, or fluctuated between prerogative and privilege, than this of Great Britain.

If we are freemen, it is becauſe the ſpirit of liberty has been never yet quite extinguiſhed among us.

We have been ſurpriſed, betrayed, forced, more than once, into ſituations little better than that of downright ſlavery. But the uſurpations have not become ſettlements. They have diſordered the frame, but not deſtroyed the principles of a free government. Like cloudy mornings, they have ſoon paſſed over, and the ſun of liberty has broke out again with double force, and double luſtre.

It muſt be a pleaſure to reflect on that uniformity of ſpirit which created, and has conſtantly preſerved

ſerved or retrieved, the original freedom of the Britiſh and Saxon conſtitutions.

I feel a ſecret pride in thinking that I was born a Briton; when I conſider that the Romans, thoſe maſters of the world, maintained their liberty little more than ſeven centuries; and that Britain, which was a free nation above ſeventeen hundred years ago, is ſo at this hour.

However ſavage our Britiſh anceſtors may be repreſented by the Romans, (whom the luxury of Greece and the effeminacy of Aſia had already corrupted), they certainly were a people of ſpirit and of ſenſe; who knew the ends of government, and obliged their governors to purſue thoſe ends.

Cæſar himſelf acknowledges, that they fought boldly for their liberties, when he invaded them; and there is good reaſon to believe, from his manner of writing and abrupt way of leaving this iſland, that they gave him a warmer reception than he is willing to own.

But to ſpeak of them after an author, in whoſe time they were better known than they were by Cæſar, or even by Tacitus; Dion Caſſius, when he is about to relate the expedition of Severus into Britain, ſays, "that they held a great part of the "government in their own power."

Their long reſiſtance againſt the Saxons, ſhews their love of civil liberty.

Their long reſiſtance againſt the uſurpation of the church of Rome, begun by Gregory, that flatterer of Phocas and Brunehalt, under pretence of converting the Saxons, ſhews their love of eccleſiaſtical liberty.

Though

Though the Saxons ſubmitted to the yoke of Rome in matters of religion, they were far from giving up the freedom of their Gothic inſtitutions of government.

The Saxon heretoges (that is, public generals) were choſen only to conduct them in war, not to rule over them in war and in peace.

Theſe heretoges, among the German colonies, who ſettled in the countries they conquered, and founded new governments, became kings, and had trappings enough to ſet off their majeſty, and to enforce their authority; but the ſupreme power centered in the Micklemote or Wittagenmote, compoſed of the King, the Lords, and the Saxon freemen, that original ſketch of a Britiſh parliament.

Here all important affairs were treated. The conduct of their kings was examined in it, and controuled by it.

The rights of the people, in thoſe days, muſt have been carried to a very great height; ſince they went hand in hand with thoſe of the church; and ſince a poſitive law declared, that if the King did not defend both, "he ſhall loſe even the name of "King. *Nec nomen regis in eo conſtabit, verum no-*"*men regis perdit.*"

The principles of the Saxon commonwealth were therefore very democratical; and theſe principles prevailed through all ſubſequent changes.

The Danes conquered the crown, but they wore it little; and the liberties of the Saxon freemen they never conquered; nor wrought any alteration in the conſtitution of the government.

Thus much it was thought neceſſary to premiſe, concerning the original conſtitution of our government.

ment. We now come to that period of hiſtory, from whence we propoſe to deduce our following remarks.

WILLIAM, the Norman, is come down to us in hiſtory under the character of a Conqueror; and though it may be diſputed whether he was ſtrictly ſo, any more than ſeveral other princes who have ſupported their titles by their ſwords; yet we may confeſs that he impoſed many new laws and cuſtoms; that he made very great alterations in the whole model of government; and that he, as well as his two ſons, ruled, upon many occaſions, like abſolute, not limited monarchs.

Yet neither he, nor they, could deſtroy the old conſtitution; becauſe neither he nor they could extinguiſh the old ſpirit of liberty.

On the contrary, the Normans and other ſtrangers, who ſettled here, were ſoon ſeized with it themſelves, inſtead of inſpiring a ſpirit of ſlavery into the Saxons.

They were originally of * Celtic or Gothic extraction, (call it which you pleaſe), as well as the people they ſubdued. They came out of the ſame northern hive; and therefore they naturally reſumed the ſpirit of their anceſtors, when they came into a country where it prevailed.

* We have thought fit to explain the expreſſion, in this place, though we know the word Celtic, as well as Scythian, hath been uſed in the ſame large and general ſenſe, which is made uſe of here; and we could ſhew (if ſuch a trifle deſerved it) that, by the Celtæ, antiquity did not always underſtand the people inhabiting a part of Gaul, notwithſtanding the quotations out of Polybius, Diodorus, &c. which have been urged, by way of cavil, againſt us.

Stephen,

Stephen, the fourth king of this race, owed his crown to the good-will of the nation; and he owed this good-will to the conceſſions he made in favour of liberty.

John came to the crown, after the death of his father Henry the ſecond, and his brother Richard the firſt, by the election of the people. His electors indeed found themſelves deceived in their expectations; for he governed in the moſt extravagant manner. But they ſoon made him feel whoſe creature he was. The conteſts between the laity and an ambitious uſurping clergy ran very high at this time. John had made his advantage of theſe diviſions. But the ſpirit of liberty prevailed, and that of faction vaniſhed before it. Men grew aſhamed of being the tools of private ambition, when public ſafety was at ſtake. Thoſe of the High Church and thoſe of the Low Church united in one common cauſe. The King bluſtered, and drew out his army; but it was a Britiſh army. No wonder therefore if the King ſubmitted, and Magna Charta was ſigned.

It was ſigned again by his ſon and ſucceſſor, Henry the third, in full parliament, and with the greateſt ſolemnity. The people however abated nothing of their jealous watchful ſpirit; and it was well for liberty they did not. The long reign of this prince was one continued ſtruggle between him and them. The iſſue of this ſtruggle was favourable to the latter. By exerting their ſtrength, they encreaſed it under Henry the third. They loſt no ground under Edward the firſt, and they gained a great deal under Edward the ſecond.

Thus

Thus was the preſent conſtitution of our government forming itſelf for about two centuries and a half; a rough building raiſed out of the demolitions which the Normans had made, and upon the ſolid foundations laid by the Saxons. The whole fabric was cemented by the blood of our fathers; for the Britiſh liberties are not the grants of princes. They are original rights, conditions of original contracts, coequal with prerogative, and coæval with our government. As ſuch, in the days we ſpeak of, they were claimed; as ſuch they were aſſerted by force of arms; as ſuch they were acknowledged; and as ſuch they were conſtantly maintained afterwards, by that pertinacious ſpirit which no difficulties nor dangers could diſcourage, nor any authority abate; not even that of the Pope, as impudently as it was exerciſed, and as fooliſhly as it was revered, in thoſe ſuperſtitious ages.

Had this ſpirit relaxed in the courſe of ſo many years, our government muſt have ſettled in an abſolute monarchy, or tyrannical ariſtocracy.

The Norman kings, of imperious tempers, aſſumed great power. The barons did the ſame. The people groaned under the oppreſſion of both. This union was unnatural, and could not laſt. The barons, enjoying a ſort of feudatory ſovereignty, were often partners, and ſometimes rivals of the kings. They had oppoſite intereſts, and they ſoon claſhed.

Thus was the opportunity created of re-eſtabliſhing a more equal free government, than that which had prevailed after the Norman invaſion.

The kings, the barons, and the clergy, not leſs ambitious or avaricious than either of the others, had

had powerful means of promoting their uſurpations. The commonalty had little, or no ſhare in the legiſlature; made no figure in the government; and it is hard to conceive how they could act, as the others might, and certainly did, by particular concerts, to the advancement of their particular intereſts.

All theſe diſadvantages were ſupplied by that ſpirit of liberty, which diffuſed itſelf through the whole maſs. Numbers were on the ſide of the Commons. In all diſputes therefore it was neceſſary to apply to them. They made the proper uſe of ſuch conjunctures. Whoever loſt, they were ſure to be gainers; for ſo they deemed themſelves, when they ſuffered all the hardſhips of war, and even laid down their lives in the quarrel, if they left liberty more improved and better ſecured to their poſterity.

By conceſſions to the commons, our kings maintained and extended their prerogatives over the barons. By eſpouſing the national intereſt, the barons continued able to cope with the crown, till they broke among themſelves. Nay, even the Church, notwithſtanding that ancient and cloſe alliance between ſecular and eccleſiaſtical tyranny, was forced, on ſome few occaſions, to be a friend to the liberties of the people.

The king, the barons, and the clergy, were all, in reality, enemies to public liberty. Their party were ſo many factions in the nation; yet they all helped, in their turns, to eſtabliſh liberty.

So true it is that every thing, even the vices of mankind, and the misfortunes of a country, will turn to the advantage of liberty, where the ſpirit of it is maintained in vigour; as every thing, even

the good qualities of mankind, and the prosperity of a country, may operate a contrary effect, where this spirit is suffered to decline.

As losing the spirit of liberty lost the liberties of Rome, even while the laws and constitutions, made for the preservation of them, remained entire; so we see that our ancestors, by keeping this spirit alive and warm, regained all the advantages of a free government, though a foreign invasion had destroyed them, in great measure, and had imposed a very tyrannical yoke on the nation.

LETTER

LETTER V.

WE are now come to the reign of Edward the third. We muſt deſire our readers to ſtop here, and at the reign of his ſucceſſor, a little; ſince no reigns can furniſh us with more memorable and pertinent examples, to ſhew how the ſpirit of liberty exerts itſelf in favour of good princes; how ſlow it is to act even againſt the worſt; and yet how effectually it is able to act, even in the moſt deſperate caſes.

Old Froiſſart * ſays that the Engliſh had an opinion, grounded on obſervations made from the days of good King Arthur, that between two valiant and able princes in this nation, there always intervenes a king "*moins ſuffiſant de ſens et de proueſſe*; of leſs "ſenſe and courage." I ſhall not warrant the exact truth of this obſervation. The proportion, I fear, is much greater on the worſe ſide in all kingdoms. But certainly Edward the third, whoſe ſtory gave occaſion to Froiſſart to broach this anecdote, ſtands between his father Edward the ſecond, and his grandſon Richard the ſecond, a bright inſtance of this truth, that 'great and good princes 'are favourers of liberty, and find their account 'in promoting the ſpirit of it; whilſt the weakeſt 'and the worſt princes chiefly affect abſolute pow-

* Vol. I. c. 2.

'er, and often meet with the fate they deſerve for 'ſuch attempts.'

The former know that they have nothing to apprehend from this ſpirit; and they wiſely prefer the generous efforts of good will and affection to the reluctant compliances of ſuch as obey by force.

The latter, conſcious that they are unable to lead, endeavour to drive their people. Unworthy to be kings, they ſtruggle to be tyrants.

Few were the blemiſhes, which may be thought to tarniſh the luſtre of this reign of Edward the third. Few and ſhort were the ſtruggles between him and his people; for as he was fierce and terrible to his enemies, he was amiable and indulgent to his ſubjects. He not only obſerved the laws, but he made the ſenſe of the nation, in ſome meaſure, a law to him. On this principle, (in which, to a conſidering mind, there will appear as much wiſdom as goodneſs) he removed a ſon, nay a favourite miſtreſs from court.

Henry the fourth, if I miſtake not, did ſomething of the ſame kind; and which of their ſucceſſors, after ſuch examples, could preſume to think it below his dignity to conſult the inclination of his people, and make them the rule of his conduct?

Under this great prince, the conſtitution of our parliaments, and the whole frame of our government became reduced into a better form. A ſpirit of liberty breathes in the laws of this glorious king; and the power and duty of parliaments are ſet forth, in ſome of them, with ſuch terms as would never have been paſſed by a prince, who had put the leaſt

pedantry,

pedantry, or the leaſt foppery into his notions of kingſhip.

The ſpirit of liberty was not idle in this reign, though it had little, or no occaſion of exerciſe againſt the crown. The uſurpations of the church were many and grievous. They had been long murmured againſt; but a falſe reſpect for religion had hitherto maintained them. This deluſion began now to be removed. Wickliffe aroſe to diſpel this magic charm; to undraw the veil of this pretended ſanctuary; and to expoſe the horrors and trifles, which lurked behind it, to public view, indignation and contempt. The ax was now firſt aimed at the root of popery; and prelates were taught the firſt leſſons of moderation. Parliaments ſat and proceeded on buſineſs, even on eccleſiaſtical buſineſs, without the intervention of mitres. There was, I believe, one parliament held, to which few, or none of the prelates were ſummoned; in order, perhaps, to teach them how little their concurrence was, eſſential to give due weight to the counſels, or full authority to the acts of parliament.

As this Prince loved, inſtead of hating, as he encouraged, inſtead of diſcountenancing, the ſpirit of liberty in his people; ſo he was ſtrengthened and ſupported by it in ſuch a manner, and in ſuch circumſtances as cannot be paralleled.

The nation had been miſerably harraſſed by civil wars and oppreſſions of various kinds, when he came to the crown. The burthen of perſonal ſervice, and the taxes raiſed to defend the dominions, which his predeceſſors held on the continent, had exhauſted all degrees of people. This miſchief was ſo much

reſented

reſented by them, that foreign intereſt and foreign counſels may be juſtly reckoned among the principal cauſes of all the diſputes, and even wars, between them and their former kings.

In this ſituation, and in this temper of mind was the nation, when Edward the third, by laying claim to the crown, and undertaking the conqueſt of France opened to his ſubjects the terrible proſpect of being worſe than ever oppreſſed by the ſame grievances; and yet his nobility and commonalty ſeconded him in all theſe enterprizes, with fewer complaints than could have been expected. Theſe men, ſo apt to complain of grievances, and ſo little patient under them, carried him triumphantly through all his wars abroad, though they ſtruggled with want, peſtilence, and famine at home

What principle produced this wonderful change? Did higher notions of prerogative prevail? Had the doctrines of a ſlaviſh ſubmiſſion at once poſſeſſed our anceſtors? by no means It was not the power, it was not the authority of the King, which forced, but it was the character of the man, which invited to theſe compliances. The ſpirit of liberty exerted itſelf in favour of the patron of liberty.

A corrupt parliament, a degenerate nobility, a ſervile commonalty will ſacrifice any thing to any prince; to a Richard the ſecond, or an Edward the third, equally and indiſcriminately. But a free, a generous, a virtuous people (ſuch as we may boaſt our anceſtors were in thoſe days) will ſacrifice every thing, except liberty, to a prince like Edward the third: and liberty is a ſacrifice, which a prince like him, will never require at their hands. To him, who would require it, they would ſacrifice nothing.

Such

Such a people may be well governed with eaſe; and it ought to be hard to govern them ill. They will do more for a prince, whom they love and eſteem, than he has a right to expect from them. If they do leſs for a prince, whom they deſpiſe or hate, they are ſurely very excuſable.

In order to render this example ſtill ſtronger and more uſeful, it may be proper to point out, beſides his general character, ſome of thoſe particulars in the conduct of Edward the third, which probably induced his people to ſacrifice their eſtates, and their lives too, ſo cheerfully in a cauſe, to which under other princes, they had been ſo averſe.

In the firſt place, as his father Edward the ſecond loſt his crown and his life in the moſt miſerable manner, by ſuffering himſelf to be governed by his miniſters, and protecting them from the reſentments of the people; ſo his ſon very early exerted his own authority, and freed himſelf from the guardianſhip, or rather ſubjection, of the Queen and Mortimer, who had long oppreſſed the nation, and diſhonoured the young King by their ſcandalous conduct.

The next reaſon ſeems to have been this; though he was magnificent in his court, yet he limited, with great care, the exactions of his purveyors; kept a ſevere hand over them; and ſuffered no more to be levied on his people, than what the neceſſary expence of his houſehold required. He ſaved for his people not for himſelf.

Thirdly; the taxes, laid in his time, were laid for viſible and important ſervices, wherein the honour at leaſt of the nation was concerned; which every man knew and approved.

Fourthly; the expences were leſſened by that double

double œconomy, which is ſo rarely found, or ev n underſtood. I mean not only that inferior œconomy, which conſiſts in the management of the receipts and iſſues of the public revenue; but that ſuperior œconomy, which conſiſts in contriving the great ſchemes of negotiation and action. When the talents for this œconomy are wanting in thoſe, who govern, the public pays for their want of genius; and the prince's or miniſter's errors are ſo many additional taxes on the people. When theſe talents are not wanting, the very reverſe happens. The genius of the prince or miniſter, comes in aid of the public charge. Much is ſaved; and art and management ſupply it all.

Edward the third began his war againſt France, in conjunction with German allies. He ſaw no better expedients at that time. But as ſoon as fortune and intrigue had procured it for him, he took another ſhorter, cheaper, and more effectual method. He ſupported the Earl of Monfort, competitor with Charles of Blois, for the duchy of Brittany. *Avecques les Allemans, et les Brabancons* (ſays Froiſſart) *il n'avoit riens fait, ſors deſpendre groſſement; et l'avoit mene et demene les ſeigneurs de l'empire, qui avoient prient ſon or et ſon argent, ainſy qu'ills avoient voulu, et riens fait. Il deſcendit a la requeſte du Comte joyeuſement, etc.* That is, "with the "Germans and the Brabancons, all he had been able "to do was to ſpend great ſums of money. The "princes of the empire, who had taken as "much as they would of his gold and his ſilver, "and had done nothing for it, were accuſtomed "to amuſe him and to tire him out. He conde"ſcended therefore to the requeſt of the Earl very "joyfully."

Fifthly;

Fifthly; it was not owing to his ſucceſs that the people that had a good opinion of his enterpriſes and promiſed themſelves an happy iſſue, how difficult or dangerous ſoever theſe enterpriſes might appear. Their confidence was placed, and very juſtly, in thoſe qualities, and that tenour of conduct, which they obſerved in their king, and to which his prodigious ſucceſs was owing. No man contrived, prepared, reſolved with more phlegm; or acted with greater fire; the reverſe of his ſucceſſor, who reſolved raſhly, and executed irreſolutely. He waited ſometimes for opportunities; but he always improved them when they happened; and thoſe accidents, which govern, or dictate the meaſures, and perpetually ſhift the fluctuating ſchemes of weak governments, were bent, by this great prince, to ſerve the wiſeſt and moſt ſteady purpoſes.

Sixthly; if he drained away ſome of the national wealth by taxes, he reſtored it very amply again, by the great care he took of extending and improving trade; by which he opened new mines of treaſure; and for a few temporary contributions enriched his people to future generations. A prince who adds to the national ſtock, has a right to ſhare the advantage he procures, and may demand ſupplies from his people, without bluſhing. But a prince, who lives a rent charge on the nation he governs; who ſits on his throne, like a monſtruous drone in the middle of a hive, draining all the combs of their honey, and neither making, nor aſſiſting the induſtrious bees to make any; ſuch a prince, I ſay, ought to bluſh at every grant he receives from a people, who never received any be-

nefit

nefit from him. The Duke of Glouceſter told Richard the ſecond, on his reſtoring Breſt to the Duke of Brittany, that he ſhould have taken a town by his own valour and conduct, before he reſigned what his anceſtors had left him. Much to the ſame purpoſe might an oppreſſed people juſtly anſwer a craving prince. When you have encreaſed the riches, and advanced the proſperity of the nation, you will have ſome right to make theſe demands upon us; but till then we ſhall think that you have none.

LETTER VI.

* THE glorious ſcene of government, which diſplayed itſelf in the reign of Edward the third, was ſtrangely altered on the ſucceſſion of Richard the ſecond; a violent, haughty, obſtinate and weak prince; whoſe reign, as one of our hiſtorians obſerves, "affords but little matter that may "ſhine in hiſtory; and cannot boaſt of any one "great and diſtinguiſhed captain; any one memo-"rable battle or important ſiege; but prorogations "of truces, abſtinences, ſufferances, patiences, to-'lerances, were the language and amuſement of the 'times; and treaties were all the while kept on "foot for a perpetual peace; treaties, ſays he, hi-"therto fruitleſs, illuſory, and impracticable."

It muſt be confeſſed, that the reins of government hung pretty looſe in the hands of Edward the third, towards the latter end of his reign; from whence proceeded the growth of thoſe factions, which diſturbed the beginning of his grandſon's reign. Some part of this was owing very probably to the abuſe of Wickliffe's doctrines; more to the cruel treatment which the inferior part of the commonalty received. The Lords grew tyrants, and the commons rebels. But theſe commotions were ſoon ſuppreſſed by the united force of the reſt of

* Mr. Franklin was taken up for printing this paper and the preceeding one, on the reign of Edward the third; but no farther proſecution hath been commenced againſt him on that account.

the

the nation; much ſooner, and with conſequences leſs fatal than in other countries, where rebellion and popular inſurrections ſeem to have been the epidemical diſtempers of that age.

If the ſpirit of faction was ſoon quelled among the commons, it prevailed openly, ſcandalouſly, and dangerouſly in the court. Something of it might be diſcerned, perhaps, among the Lords who oppoſed the court; even in the Duke of Glouceſter, the favourite of the people; in the Duke of Lancaſter, a wiſe prince, and who acted long the moderating part; in Arundel, and others. Nothing of it was to be obſerved in the general proceedings of parliament, and in the national conduct.

The juſtneſs of the character, given before of Richard the ſecond, diſcovered itſelf very early in his actions. He had a brutality and a good opinion of himſelf; one of which might have betrayed him into a diſcovery of what it was his intereſt to conceal, if the other had not made him capable of doing it, even on reflection. Hence came thoſe famous and fooliſh ſayings of this prince, which hiſtory has preſerved, and which gave his people timely warning what they had to expect from him. Of his commons, he ſaid, "That ſlaves they were, and ſlaves they ſhould be." Upon an addreſs from parliament to remove his chancellor and treaſurer, his anſwer was, "That he would not remove, at "their requeſt, the meaneſt ſcullion out of his "kitchen."

However, he found men, as all princes may eaſily do, who flattered him in his vices and follies; ſuch men, for inſtance, as Neville, Vere, Poole, Treſſilian, and others; who, to faſten him to them-

themſelves, made the nation odious to him; as they made him odious to the nation by their rapine, their inſolence, and by a weak adminiſtration; which expoſed the kingdom to be invaded by the Scots, and threatened and inſulted by the French.

During all this time, parliaments met frequently, and gave neceſſary ſupplies; ſome grievances they redreſſed; but bore the mal-adminiſtration of the court-faction till the tenth year of this king; when they proſecuted the favourites with great juſtice; with temper, and yet with vigour. They ſpared nothing to provide for the defence of the kingdom by ſea and land; and having put the adminiſtration, for a time, into the hands of perſons choſen by themſelves, gave the King ſuch a warning, as might have taught him to abandon a faction, and to throw himſelf on his people; but it proved in vain. His favourite miniſters perſuaded him that they ſuffered for his ſake; that the aim of their enemies was to dethrone him by diſgracing them; and whilſt all the troubles of his reign were due to his ſupport of them, they made him believe that they ſuffered for executing his orders, and maintaining his authority. Nay, they repreſented to him, that, by accuſing the counſellors, a man plainly ſhews, that he believes the ſovereign incapable of governing; and that the readieſt way to diſcredit a prince, is perſuading his ſubjects, that he makes uſe of ill miniſters. Theſe arguments and artifices, ridiculous as they ſeem, ſucceeded, and had their effect for ſome time longer.

The deluded King entered into a cloſer conjunction than ever with his miniſters. He took their iniquities on himſelf; made their cauſe his own;

was privy to their plots of poiſoning their enemies; of packing juries; of corrupting the judges to give opinions againſt law; and to all that dirty work, which they wanted, not he. Nay, by his encouragement they raiſed troops, and a battle was fought in their quarrel; but they were defeated; and the fourteenth parliament, called the wonder-working parliament, having puniſhed the judges and miniſters with great ſeverity, endeavoured to reconcile the King and his people. They gave him great ſubſidies, and renewed their homage and fealty to him.

Even all this ſtill proved in vain. No experience was ſufficient to reclaim Richard the ſecond. He governed tyrannically at home, and took a wife and bought a peace from France. It is remarkable that the peace coſt him 400,000 *l.* much more than he got by his wife. His favourite miniſters had, before this time, endeavoured to perſuade him to give up Calais, and purchaſe the friendſhip of France to aſſiſt him againſt the lords and others, who oppoſed him. This is not the laſt, nor leaſt inſtance of conducting foreign affairs, purely with regard to the intereſt of miniſters, and without any to the honour and intereſt of the nation.

The factions among the great men were of double advantage to the King for a time.

Firſt, the body of the people, who ſhewed themſelves ſufficiently animated with a ſpirit of liberty, grew cool in eſpouſing the quarrels of the lords, after they thought liberty ſecured by the proceedings of parliament, in the tenth year of this king; and though many particular actions of violence, of treachery, and of cruelty, were committed by Richard

chard the ſecond, they bore all with the greateſt patience for ſeveral years.

In the next place, theſe factions among the great men enabled the King to divide them; to play one againſt the other, and to build up his tyranny on the ruins of both. His uncle, the Duke of Glouceſter, was baſely betrayed and barbarouſly murdered by him. He procured a packed parliament, conſiſting of men impoſed on the ſhires and towns by the King's authority, wholly managed by court favourites, and which bent all its endeavours to deſtroy the liberties and privileges of the people. With the help of ſuch a parliament, he wreaked vengeance on thoſe who had oppoſed him; got his authority exalted above all law, and exerciſed a moſt cruel tyranny.

The people ſtill bore; and it is probable that the King, and others as well as he, imagined that they would be obliged to bear on; ſince the whole legiſlature united in their oppreſſion. But in this he was deceived. When the parliament took the part of the people, the people followed the motions of parliament. When they had no hopes from parliament, they followed the firſt ſtandard which was ſet up againſt the King. The ſame ſpirit of liberty, which had been ſo ſlow to act under ſo many provocations, acted with the greateſt vigour when it was leaſt expected. The King, at the head of an army in Ireland, the Duke of York at the head of another in England, and the Earl of Saliſbury at the head of a third, could do the King no ſervice. The armies would not fight for the King againſt their country. The whole nation abandoned him, or acted againſt him. Some of his miniſters were

hanged; particularly thoſe who had been the great inſtruments of taxing and oppreſſing the people. He was at length forced to reſign, and to ſubſcribe an inſtrument with his own hand, by which he confeſſed himſelf unworthy to govern the kingdom any longer. This inſtrument of reſignation was not only unanimouſly approved of in parliament, but articles of accuſation were ordered to be drawn up againſt him, to juſtify their reſolution of depoſing him. Theſe articles were thirty-five in number, ſetting forth the particulars of his miſgovernment; two of which are to this effect.

"That he had put the adminiſtration of the pub-
"lic affairs in the hands of unexperienced and ill-
"deſigning perſons, to the great damage of the
"people, who were loaded with exceſſive taxes:

"That, in his negotiations with foreign princes,
"he made uſe of ſo many equivocations and ſo-
"phiſtries, that none would take his word any
"more."

It is very obſervable, that theſe extremities fell upon Richard the ſecond, at a time when every thing ſeemed to contribute to his ſupport, in the exerciſe of that arbitary power which he had aſſumed. Thoſe whom he had reaſon to fear, were removed either by violent death, or baniſhment; and others were ſecured in his intereſt by places, or favours at court. The great offices of the crown, and the magiſtracy of the whole kingdom, were put into ſuch hands as were fit for his deſigns; beſides which, he had a parliament entirely at his devotion; but all theſe advantageous circumſtances ſerved only to prove, that a prince can have no real ſecurity againſt the juſt reſentments of an injured

jured and exaſperated nation, for, as Rapin obſerves upon the ſad cataſtrophe of this reign, and that of Edward the ſecond: "In ſuch governments "as that of England, all endeavours uſed by the "King to make himſelf abſolute, are but ſo many "ſteps towards his own downfall."

It is farther obſerved, by another eminent writer upon this reign, (which he juſtly calls a reign of favourites); "that the King in his diſtreſs, ſaw him-"ſelf forſaken by thoſe, whom he ſhould have for-"ſaken before; the very men who had ſo much "flattered him with their exceſſive love and loyal-"ty, and, like thoſe mean inſects which live with "a little warmth, but ſhrink at any change of wea-"ther; they, who had contributed to all his er-"rors in his proſperity, tranſplanted their zeal in-"to the new ſunſhine, as ſoon as his ſucceſſor de-"manded the crown."

LETTER VII.

FROM the reigns of Edward the third, and Richard the ſecond, we ſhall haſten downwards, as faſt as ſome neceſſary obſervations will permit. Thoſe of the princes of York and Lancaſter form a period of more than eighty years, which paſſed in foreign and civil wars; in frequent revolutions of government, and in all thoſe diſorders which uſually accompany and follow ſuch revolutions.

The party of Richard the ſecond, even after the death of that unhappy prince, broke out into open rebellion againſt Henry the fourth, but their efforts were vain. He held the crown faſt which the parliament had given him; and the chief of his oppoſers periſhed in their attempts. Happy had it been if they alone had ſuffered; but here we muſt obſerve a neceſſary and cruel conſequence of faction. As it oppreſſeth the whole community, if it ſucceeds; ſo it often draws oppreſſion, not only on itſelf alone, but on the whole community, when it fails. The attempts to dethrone Henry the fourth juſtified him, no doubt, in ſupporting himſelf by a military force. They excuſed him, likewiſe, very probably, in the minds of many, for governing with a ſevere hand; for doing ſeveral illegal and tyrannical actions; for invading the privileges of parliament; at leaſt, in the point of elections; and for obtaining, by theſe means, frequent and heavy taxes on the people; for all this might appear the harder,

harder, becauſe it happened in the reign of a King, who had no title to his crown but the good will of the people, and the free gift of parliament; ſo it might appear, on the other hand leſs grievous, becauſe ſome part of it was rendered neceſſary by the oppoſition which a faction made to a parliamentary eſtabliſhment; and becauſe the reſt of it was repreſented, perhaps, under that umbrage, to be ſo likewiſe, by the court-logic of that age.

A people may be perſuaded to bear patiently a deal of oppreſſion, as long as they can be perſuaded that they bear it only to defend their own choice, and to maintain their own acts; but if they diſcover this to be nothing more than a pretence, by which ſuch powers are kept up as are unneceſſary to their ſecurity, and dangerous to their liberty; by which the wealth of the whole nation is drained into the coffers of a few; and by which, in one word, they become expoſed to ruin by the very means which they took to avoid it; it cannot be expected that they will be patient very long.

It deſerves particular notice, that although Henry the fourth was willing to ſhew his clemency, at the beginning of his reign, by inflicting a very ſlight puniſhment on the wicked, and hated miniſters of the late King; yet it being alledged in their excuſe, "that Richard had compelled them to act, the "parliament took occaſion from thence to paſs an "act, by which it was declared, that, for the fu-"ture, compulſion ſhould be no legal excuſe, to "juſtify actions contrary to law." The reaſonableneſs and expediency of this act are very manifeſt; for it is the indiſpenſable duty of a good miniſter to diſſuade his maſter from all illegal meaſures; or,

or, if he cannot prevail, to quit his ſervice, rather than ſuffer himſelf to be made the inſtrument of them; and if the commands of the prince were to be allowed a ſufficient juſtification, the prerogative of doing no wrong would be extended to miniſters, and nobody would be left accountable for mal-adminiſtration.

In the ſhort, but triumphant, reign of Henry the fifth, the ſpirit of faction was awed; and the ſpirit of liberty had no occaſion of exerting itſelf; at leaſt with ſtruggle, and in any ſignal manner, under a prince juſt, moderate, and pious, according to the religion of thoſe times.

The reign of his ſon was the reign of faction; and it diſcloſes an horrid ſcene of iniquity, folly, and madneſs. The ſcandalous management of public affairs, which brought infinite loſs and diſhonour to the nation, gave real occaſion, as well as pretence, to commotions and inſurrections. The contemptible character of the man who ſat on the throne, revived the hopes of the faction of York. The faction of Lancaſter took the alarm. Moſt of the great and active men were attached to one ſide, or to the other, by obligation, by reſentment, by hopes, or by fears. The national intereſt was ſunk, to the ſhame of the nation, in the particular intereſt of two families.

In the civil wars, which happened a century and a half, or two centuries before this time, the point in diſpute was how the people ſhould be governed. In theſe we are ſpeaking of the point in diſpute was who ſhould govern. The firſt was worth contending for, and deſerved all the blood which was ſhed in the quarrel. But this cannot be ſaid of the laſt, which

which ought always to be looked upon with great indifference: except in cafes where it has fo immediate and neceffary a relation to the firft, that fecuring the firft depends, in a great meafure, on fetting the laft. Such cafes have happened, and particular inftances may be eafily found, but the contrary cafes, where men have fought with governors, without regard to government, are eafy to be found likewife; and that was plainly the cafe of the two factions of York and Lancafter.

The parliaments, in thofe days, feemed to be in another temper; very little concerned who was King, and very much to preferve the conftitution. In the many revolutions which happened, each fide would have the parliament for them. Whatever titles they fet up, they were glad to hold the crown by the grant, or by the confirmation of parliament. The parliament wifely complied, whoever prevailed. The chance of war determined who fhould be king; at one time Henry the fixth, at another Edward the fourth, and the parliament accordingly placed them on the throne, and fettled their government.

There is another obfervation which ought to be made, before we leave this period of time. The reigns of Richard the fecond and Henry the fourth, had fhewn the dangerous confequences of that influence, which the crown had obtained in the elections of members of parliament. The watchful fpirit of liberty was foon alarmed, and prevailed to make fuch regulations about elections, and about the qualifications of the electors and the elected, as feemed at that time fufficient to prevent this influence for the future. Thefe regulations appear in feveral laws, made during the reigns of the three Lancaftrian

ſtrian princes; and our elections proceed in a great meaſure upon them to this very day. Theſe regulations have required, and muſt, in the nature of things, require to be altered, as the courſe of accidents, or the change of national circumſtances ſhall ſuggeſt reaſons for ſo doing. But then ſuch alterations have been, and ought always to be contrived ſo as to adapt them better, and to enforce them more ſtrongly; becauſe the principle on which they are founded can never vary, and is ſo eſſential to the preſervation of liberty, that if it be loſt, and if a practice in oppoſition to it ſhould ever prevail, the balance of our government would be that moment loſt and the Britiſh conſtitution left at the mercy of any ambitious prince, or wicked miniſter.

For this reaſon, Mr. Rapin obſerves very juſtly, "that there are but two ways of depriving the "Engliſh of their liberties; either by laying aſide "parliaments, or bribing them:" And in another place he ſays, "that the Engliſh freedom will be "at an end, whenever the court invades the free "election of parliaments."

It is neceſſary to inſiſt upon this obſervation a little; becauſe it hath been ridiculed, though dully, and great pains have been taken to explode the doctrine contained in it; which was laid down in theſe words. "In a conſtitution like ours, the ſafety of "the whole depends on the balance of the parts; "and the balance of the parts on their mutual in-"dependency on each other." Theſe words, it ſeems, even with thoſe of Thuanus to explain them, convey no idea to the London Journaliſt; but this will be found, as I apprehend, to be his fault, or his

his defect; not Oldcaſtle's. A man born without the ſenſe of hearing, or ſtopping his ears, and determined at any rate not to hear, may be deaf to the voice of Stentor himſelf.

I ſhall not enter into any altercations with the London Journaliſt, nor go out of the road to have the honour of ſuch company. But when I meet him in my way, I ſhall encounter him frankly; without the leaſt fear of being cruſhed by the weight of his arguments; or, which is more, by the power of his patron.

To ſay, like this author, "that the carrying on "of buſineſs, and maintaining government by "powers abſolutely diſtinct, and abſolutely inde-"pendent, is a mere Utopian ſcheme," muſt proceed from ignorance, or folly. Have not powers, abſolutely diſtinct and independent, been joined by federal unions? Are no ſuch examples to be found, even at this day? Has not this been brought about by the very reaſon given to prove that it can never happen; becauſe men agree when they ſee reaſon for agreement; and they ſee reaſon for agreement, when they ſee their intereſt in agreeing? Oſborne could not be in earneſt, when he let ſuch ſtuff fall from his pen. He meant to elude the argument, and to perplex his readers, or he meant nothing. But this ſhall not paſs. The matter is too important. He ſhall not be talked to, as he deſires, without a metaphor; and what has been advanced ſhall be applied to our government.

A king of Great Britain is that ſupreme magiſtrate, who has a negative voice in the legiſlature. He is entruſted with the executive power; and ſeveral other powers and privileges; which we call prerogа-

prerogatives, are annexed to this truſt. The two houſes of parliament have their rights and privileges; ſome of which are common to both; others particular to each. They prepare, they paſs bills, or they refuſe to paſs ſuch as are ſent to them. They addreſs, repreſent, adviſe, remonſtrate. The ſupreme judicature reſides in the lords. The commons are the grand inqueſt of the nation; and to them it belongs likewiſe to judge of national expences, and to give ſupplies accordingly.

If the legiſlative as well as the executive power, was wholly in the king, as in ſome countries, he would be abſolute; if in the lords, our government would be an ariſtocracy; if in the commons, a democracy. It is this diviſion of power, theſe, diſtinct privileges attributed to the king, to the lords, and to the commons, which conſtitute a limited monarchy.

Again; as they conſtitute a limited monarchy, ſo the wiſdom of our government has provided, as far as human wiſdom can provide, for the preſervation of it, by this diviſion of power, and by theſe diſtinct privileges. If any one part of the three, which compoſe our government, ſhould, at any time, uſurp more power than the law gives, or make an ill uſe of a legal power, the other two parts may, by uniting their ſtrength, reduce this power into its proper bounds, or correct the abuſe of it; nay, if at any time two of theſe parts ſhould concur in uſurping, or abuſing power, the weight of the third may, at leaſt, retard the miſchief, and give time and chance for preventing it.

This is that balance, which has been ſo much talked of; and this is the uſe of it. Both are plain

to

to common ſenſe, and to experience; as will appear farther in the courſe of theſe remarks; where we ſhall have occaſion to ſhew how often the proper uſe of this balance hath ſaved our conſtitution: and to what misfortunes we have been expoſed by the neglect or improper uſe of it.

Since this diviſion of power, and theſe diſtinct privileges conſtitute and maintain our government; it follows that the confuſion of them tends to deſtroy it. This propoſition is therefore true; that, in a conſtitution like ours, the ſafety of the whole depends on the balance of the parts. Let us ſee whether it be true that the balance of the parts conſiſts in their mutual independency.

To ſpeak again without any metaphor, the power which the ſeveral parts of our government have of controuling and checking one another, may be called a dependency on one another; and may be argued for by thoſe, who want to throw darkneſs round them, as the dependency oppoſed to the independency, mentioned in the propoſition. But the fallacy is groſs. We have ſhewn that this power of controul in each, which reſults from the diviſion of power amongſt all the parts of our government, is neceſſary to the preſervation of it; and thus a ſort of conſtitutional dependency, if I may have leave to expreſs myſelf in that manner, is created among them; but this mutual dependency cannot be oppoſed to the independency pleaded for. On the contrary, this mutual dependency cannot ſubſiſt without ſuch an independency; for whenever this independency is loſt, the mutual dependency is that moment changed into a particular, conſtant dependency of one part on two; or, which is

ſtill more unreaſonable, of two parts on one. The conſtitutional dependency, as I have called it for diſtinction's ſake, conſiſts in this; that the proceedings of each part of the government, when they come forth into action and affect the whole, are liable to be examined and controuled by the other parts. The independency pleaded for conſiſts in this; that the reſolutions of each part, which direct theſe proceedings, be taken independently and without any influence, direct, or indirect, on the others. Without the firſt, each part would be at liberty to attempt deſtroying the balance, by uſurping, or abuſing power; but without the laſt, there can be no balance at all. I will illuſtrate this, by ſuppoſing a prince, who claims and exerciſes a right of levying money without conſent of parliament. He could not be oppoſed effectually, if the two houſes of parliament had not a right to oppoſe him; to call his miniſters to account; and to make him feel that, far from being abſolute, he was under this conſtitutional dependency; but he would not be oppoſed at all, if the two houſes of parliament were under his influence, and incapable of directing their proceedings independently of him. One would be aſhamed to inſiſt thus much on a point ſo very clear, if ſome men were not ſo hardened to all ſenſe of ſhame as to maintain the contrary; and that there are men capable of doing this, is one of thoſe melancholy ſymptoms, which characteriſe the preſent age. I could almoſt appeal to the cool thoughts, and the private reflections of ſome of theſe writers, whether any thing can be more ſcandalous than the taſk they have undertaken. To ſkreen their patrons, they endeavour to diſtinguiſh us out of our greateſt national

tional advantages; as was obſerved in the caſe of Dunkirk. To reconcile the minds of men to ſuch meaſures, as their patrons may want, and as no honeſt man will take, they endeavour to demoliſh the very corner-ſtones, on which the whole fabric of liberty reſts. Their iniquity, it muſt be confeſſed, is very ſyſtematical. When they write for corruption, they write for the means. When they write for the dependency of the parliament on the court, they write for the end. Well might Oldcaſtle ſay of theſe writers, their patrons and abettors, that the maſque was pulled off on one ſide. Let me conjure them, in the name of modeſty, to call themſelves Whigs no longer. It is time they ſhould lay that appellation aſide; ſince it will not be hard to prove, from the general tenor of their writings, that the maxims they advance, the doctrines they inculcate, and the conduct they recommend, lead to the deſtruction of civil liberty, as much as the political leſſons of Sibthorpe, Manwaring or Archbiſhop Laud himſelf. They and their followers declared themſelves directly againſt liberty. To plead for it was almoſt blaſphemy; and to aſſert it little leſs than the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, according to the doctrines taught by theſe divines. Such abſurdities made few converts in thoſe days; and the preachers of them would meet with the utmoſt contempt in theſe. But the writers, of whom we complain, affect to maintain the cauſe of liberty, whilſt they betray it. They aſſert the principles of liberty in general, and ſometimes reaſon upon them well enough; but when they apply them to particular caſes, they prevaricate, evade, and exert all their poor endeavours to turn the cannon of liberty

againſt herſelf. The others had *fœnum in cornu*. They put mankind on their guard againſt them, and were the true promoters of all the miſchief and confuſion, which followed, when the nation run into the utmoſt extremes, in oppoſition to them. Theſe men inſinuate themſelves as friends to liberty. They are looked upon as ſuch by ſome few perſons, who mean well to liberty, even at this time; and yet they are almoſt wholly employed in promoting that, which is deſtructive of liberty and inconſiſtent with it; corruption and dependency. Laud and the others endeavoured openly to lop the branches and cut down the tree; but theſe men are privately poiſoning the root of liberty. The power of the court and the authority of the lawyers could not make the levying ſhip-money paſs for law, nor prevail on the nation to bear it. But if it were poſſible to ſuppoſe an houſe of commons as dependent as theſe lawyers, (and they would be as dependent, if the doctrines, which we oppoſe, prevailed amongſt them) the nation might then be loaded with taxes, oppreſſed with debts, and reduced to the greateſt miſery by law. Our liberties, as well as our eſtates, might be taken from us. We might be legally undone. Theſe are poſſible conſequences of ſuch doctrines. If they are not probable, we owe no thanks to the weekly preachers of them. The nature of our preſent ſettlement, which is built on the foundation of liberty, the intereſt and honour of the Prince now on the throne, as well as of all his illuſtrious poſterity, are our ſecurity againſt theſe dangers; but ſtill, I ſay, we owe no thanks to the writers on the ſide of the miniſtry.

I have dwelt pretty much upon this point, to ſhew

ſhew what is the real deſign of theſe remarks; and I will venture to add that thoſe perſons, who oppoſe ſuch doctrines as we have been oppoſing, will appear at laſt to be the trueſt friends to his majeſty King George, and the Proteſtant ſucceſſion; which can ſubſiſt only upon thoſe principles, upon which it was originally eſtabliſhed.

LETTER VIII.

IF the reign of Henry the ſixth was a reign of faction, thoſe of the houſe of York were ſo likewiſe. The popularity, bravery, cruelty, raſhneſs, uxorioufneſs, incontinence of Edward the fourth; in ſhort, his good and bad qualities worked the different effects of ſupporting, exaſperating, and increaſing factions. The characters of Henry the ſixth's Queen, and of the Earl of Warwick, to mention no more of the principal actors on that bloody ſtage, conſpired to maintain and aggravate this national calamity.

In theſe long, continued ſtruggles, the whole nation became involved, and the factions of York and Lancaſter growing every day more animated and better diſciplined, we are not to wonder that they fought *uſque ad internecionem*; at leaſt, till the field of battle, the ſcaffold, and ſome theatres of clandeſtine murthers had left no man, on one ſide, alive, who was in a condition to oppoſe, or give jealouſy to the other. But that, which may very juſtly raiſe our wonder, is that Edward the fourth, having ſecured to himſelf and his family the poſſeſſion of the throne, by the murder of Henry the ſixth, and his ſon, and by the total defeat of the whole Lancaſtrian party, ſhould ſuffer two new factions to be nurſed up, which divided his own party, occaſioned the murder of his ſons; and, by eſtabliſhing the ſhort-lived tyranny of his brother, brought

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the Earl of Richmond to the throne, and ſunk for ever the houſe of York in that of Lancaſter.

Edward the fourth's Queen was the original cauſe of all this miſchief, and a principal ſufferer herſelf in the courſe of it. She was reſolved to govern at any rate; and Rapin obſerves, "That, as her being "Queen gave her no manner of title to meddle with "the affairs of the public, ſhe knew how to ma- "nage that matter another way; namely, by the "influence ſhe had over the King. Though Ed- "ward often proved falſe to her, ſhe bore it very "patiently, and never ſhewed her uneaſineſs at it. "Edward, charmed to find himſelf at liberty to "purſue his inclinations, without danger of conti- "nual reproaches, repaid her moderation with the "moſt obliging and condeſcending behaviour; of "which ſhe knew how to make a good uſe." She maintained this aſcendant over her huſband to the laſt, and for a little complaiſance, which coſt her nothing in preſent, ſhe purchaſed a degree of pow- er in the ſtate, which coſt her dear in conſequence, by alienating the affections of the people from her huſband, during his life, and ruining his family af- terwards, as I have hinted before.

Her aim was, according to Rapin, "to ſecure "her power during the King's life, and, in caſe "ſhe ſurvived him, to make ſure of the govern- "ment of the kingdom, in the name of the prince "her ſon, when he ſhould come to be on the "throne; but by a fatality, not unuſual to the "beſt-laid projects, this very thing proved the oc- "caſion of her own and her family's ruin."

I cannot think, as Rapin ſeems to do, that her project deſerved to be ranked amongſt thoſe which

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are the beſt-laid. It appears to be the narrow project of a woman who had cunning, inſinuation, and the ſpirit of intrigue, with much pride and ambition; but wanted that extenſive knowledge, and that ſuperior genius, (ſuch as Catherine of Medicis and our Queen Elizabeth poſſeſſed), which is neceſſary to conduct ſo great a deſign as her paſſion prompted her to undertake; for what was her project? Was it to acquire an intereſt in the nation, by deſerving well of it? Nothing leſs. It was ſingly this; to form a faction at court, by raiſing her relations and immediate dependents, which ſhould be wholly her own, and into whoſe hands ſhe might throw all the power and profit, which the King had to beſtow. She had the good luck to compaſs this deſign, and triumphed, no doubt very wiſely, in her great ſucceſs. Surrounded by her creatures, ſhe looked no farther than that circle, and either took no notice of the temper of the nation, or judged of it by the temper of the court. But the riſe of this faction immediately formed another, and eſtabliſhed the diſtinction of ancient and new nobility. The former had the true natural ſtrength, which great eſtates in land, and eſtabliſhed credit in the nation gave them. The latter had no ſtrength of their own; none but that adventitious ſtrength, which aroſe from employments and favour at court. They brought nothing to court, which could make the court amends for envy and diſcontent, which their elevation created. To ſupply this, two things were done; which ſerved, perhaps, to fortify the Queen in her deluſion, and thereby made the ruin of her ambitious projects the ſurer. All thoſe, who were not in the good graces of her faction, were

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diſgraced at court, and in effect baniſhed from it. Nay they were perſecuted by the power of it; as the Duke of Clarence, the King's own brother, was even to death. The names of the parties of York and Lancaſter might ſubſiſt and be made uſe of, on proper occaſions; but, in reality, the being for or againſt the party of the Queen was the ſole diſtinction which prevailed; and even the friends of the houſe of York, whom the Queen did not affect, were debarred from having the King's ear; excepting only three of his old and moſt faithful ſervants, who maintained themſelves againſt her and her faction. I mean Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, Haſtings, and Stanley.

Another method which this Queen took to ſtrengthen herſelf and her faction, was by taking up money by illegal and oppreſſive means; particularly by ſetting proſecutions on foot againſt the rich men of the kingdom, ſeveral of whom were arraigned of high treaſon, and encouraging the judges to get them found guilty at any rate. Habington obſerves, (in his hiſtory of this King,) "that as "their wealth was the principal evidence againſt "them, though their perſons were acquitted, their "eſtates were found guilty."

The ſame hiſtorian obſerves farther, "that the "memory of theſe carriages hithertofore, in a bu- "ſineſs that concerned the life of a man reputed in- "nocent, drew the world into much fear that he "would now decline to rigour. Neither was the "King totally excuſed, although this cruel avarice "was laid to the Queen, who having a numerous "iſſue and kindred, by favour raiſed up to the "higheſt titles, was almoſt neceſſitated, for ſup-

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" portance of their honours, to rack the king-
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Edward ſeemed ſenſible, before his death, of the miſchievous conſequences which this conduct, and the claſhing of two factions might produce. He endeavoured to prevent them by reconciling the two parties; a poor expedient! (as Rapin juſtly obſerves) " which could not eaſily produce the effect " he expected."

The Duke of Glouceſter, who concealed his deſign till his brother's death, took advantage of theſe factions. He made his court publicly to the Queen, and held a private correſpondence with the oppoſite party. Nay, he found means, by fomenting it, to raiſe a third for himſelf.

I have dwelt the longer in this place, on the ſtrange turns and cruel effects of faction; becauſe, I believe, no example can be produced out of any hiſtory, which ſets them in a ſtronger light; and becauſe this period of time affording but ſmall matter to recommend the ſpirit of liberty, which had little to do in the tranſactions of it, I imagine that pointing out the fatal conſequences of the contrary ſpirit, which then prevailed, may anſwer the ſame end; as expoſing of vice is frequently the ſtrongeſt recommendation of virtue.

But we muſt not imagine, notwithſtanding all the contrary appearances in this period, that the ſpirit of liberty was abſolutely extinguiſhed. Though that flame was loſt, for the moſt part, in the conſtant glare of faction, yet it was ſtill alive; and by living, preſerved the conſtitution of our government during the whole courſe of theſe civil wars.

If we look cloſely into theſe ſcenes of confuſion,

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we may diſcover many particular inſtances of the operations of this ſpirit. Such were the difficulties and delays oppoſed to the grant of tonage and poundage, for nine years together; and the many reſtrictions added to this grant, when it was at laſt obtained by Edward the fourth. Other inſtances to the ſame purpoſe might be quoted; but we chuſe to inſiſt on a more general obſervation, already mentioned by us, which runs through the whole period, and is ſo ſtrongly vouched by hiſtory, as to admit of no cavil.

The obſervation we are going to make, contains a memorable exception to this propoſition, which is but too generally true, that the ſpirit of liberty, and the ſpirit of faction are incompatible, and cannot long ſubſiſt together. The virtue of our anceſtors made this exception; and if it hath been remembered to their ſhame, that they ſunk the national intereſt in the particular intereſt of two families; it ought to be remembered to their honour, that they did ſo in this ſingle point only, who ſhould reign, and in no other. We took notice, in a former paper, that, upon every revolution, each ſide engaged the parliament for them, and that whoever prevailed, the parliament wiſely complied. This conduct, which laſted from Richard the ſecond, down to Richard the third, preſerved our liberties; but it could not have been purſued, nor could our liberties by conſequence have been preſerved, if the ſpirit of liberty had not been latent in the hearts of thoſe very men, who ſeemed to breathe nothing but faction. How could it have happened that the ſole title of conqueſt was never eſtabliſhed in ſo many revolutions brought about by the ſword, if the actors

ors in them had not been ſtrongly affected with a love and reverence for the free conſtitution of our government? The princes of York and Lancaſter themſelves were willing, nay deſirous to have a parliamentary confirmation of their titles real or pretended. How came they to be ſo deſirous of it? How came they to think it neceſſary? The caſe is plain. The temper of their parties and of their armies begot this neceſſity. The ſpirit of liberty prevailed enough in the whole body of the nation, out of which theſe parties and armies were compoſed, to preſerve the principles of public freedom, though not enough to preſerve the public peace. Each ſide contended to have a king of their own party; but neither ſide would have a tyrant. They ſacrificed their lives to faction; but would not give up their liberties. The victorious armies led their kings to the foot of the throne; but carried them no farther.

The author of the ſhort Hiſtory of Standing Armies, obſerves, that "in all the wars of York and "Lancaſter, whatever party prevailed, we do not "find they ever attempted to keep up a ſtanding "army. Such was the virtue of thoſe times, ſays "he, that they would rather run the hazard of "forfeiting their heads and eſtates to the rage of "the oppoſite party, than certainly enſlave their "country, though they themſelves were to be the "tyrants." This remark is juſt, as far as it goes; and it goes as far as that author wanted to carry it; but it is not ſo full, nor carried ſo far as hiſtory will warrant. That the princes who obtained the crown by their armies, did not attempt to govern by their armies afterwards, is moſt true, and may reflect ſome honour on thoſe princes, and on the heads

heads of their parties. But there is something more than this remarkable in the conduct of those times; for even in the heat of victory, in the raptures of a successful revolution, and before the armies could be disbanded, we see these princes obliged to ascend the steps of the throne in such a manner, and under such conditions as the parliament thought fit to prescribe, and as were not always agreeable to them. This I am sure, reflects great honour on the parliaments, who were actors in the last scenes of all these revolutions; and on the armies, who contented themselves to become spectators in such conjunctures. We will take the first example which presents itself in these wars.

The Duke of Lancaster was at the head of an army of 60,000 men, when he came to the crown. The proclamation which he published the very day he was crowned, shewed how very unwilling he was to seem to hold his crown purely by the right of election. He would gladly have set up that of conquest, or a title derived from Richard the second's resignation; or a title by blood, or any title but the true one. Notwithstanding this, he was obliged, when nothing could have obliged him but the sense of his own party and army, to submit to as formal an election as ever was made. The two houses took notice of the blind claim of right which he entered. They chose him to be king, upon the question put to them, after having given their negative to the Duke of York; to his sons; and to others, who were severally proposed in the same manner to them. They seem industriously to have contrived and pursued, on this occasion, a method of proceeding as opposite as possible to the views

and inclination of this prince, whose army attended him, and whose rival was his prisoner.

Again; to take another example from the latter end of these wars. The battle of Northampton being won, and Henry the sixth taken, the Duke of York hastens out of Ireland to put himself at the head of his party and his army. The parliament meets. The Duke asserts his undoubted right by descent to the crown, which he demands as due to him, without any interposition of parliament. He shews the utmost, and even an indecent impatience to take possession of it. He is supported by his own party. He is opposed by others. But the matter is by all submitted to the debate and decision of parliament. The debate itself must have been grievous enough to a prince so fond of a crown, and so much warmed with the notion of his hereditary right. But the decision of this affair must have wounded him to the quick. So little regard was paid to his right, that he was forced to content himself with leaving the crown on the head of Henry the sixth during that prince's life, and not to have the prospect of succeeding to it, till after that prince's decease; which, by the way, was a point of less value to him, because he was older than Henry the sixth, and could not hope to be the better for it according to the course of nature. He submitted to all these mortifications; and a very judicious historian attributes his submission to his moderation; but I believe those who fully consider his former conduct, and his passionate behaviour at this time, will hardly subscribe to such a judgment. His submission, like that of Henry the fourth, in the case before cited, was a submission which the temper of his

his party rendered neceſſary. They would not force the reſolutions of the two houſes; and why the two houſes would go no farther in his favour at that juncture, might eaſily be accounted for, if this were a proper place for that diſquiſition. After the battle of Wakefield, where the Duke of York was killed, and that of St. Albans where the Earl of Warwick was beaten, the faction of York were determined, by the dangers they had run, and by the loſſes they had ſuſtained, to balance no longer, but to ſet the crown on the head of the Earl of March; and yet they proceeded no otherwiſe than under the authority of parliament, which had ratified the agreement made between the late Duke of York and Henry the ſixth. By one article of this agreement it was ſtipulated, that if King Henry broke it in any point, the crown and royal dignity ſhould immediately devolve on the Duke of York, if alive, or in failure of him, on his next heir. The Earl of Warwick therefore, in a kind of military aſſembly, (for a part of the army, at leaſt, was there), proceeded to the election of Edward the fourth; but he proceeded on this foundation. The great efforts made to break this agreement, and to defeat the effect of it, by King Henry's Queen, and the Lancaſtrian party, were interpreted, and not without colour, as ſo many infractions of it. By conſequence, Edward the fourth had an immediate right to the crown, by virtue of the act of parliament, made in confirmation of this convention, which act and convention were produced by Warwick, who cauſed them to be publicly read. The proceedings of this aſſembly, which hath a tumultuous air in hiſtory, was therefore in reality a pro-

clamation of a king, made by authority of parliament, and not of an election of a king, without that authority. Let us conclude, that if the ſpirit of faction hath, on ſome occaſions, prevailed over the ſpirit of liberty ſo far as to defeat and even pervert the deſigns of the latter; the ſpirit of liberty hath likewiſe revived in its turn, on other occaſions, and prevented the conſummation of that miſery, which faction would naturally and of courſe have produced. Let us conclude that all ſtanding armies, for whatſoever purpoſe inſtituted, or in whatſoever habit cloathed, may be eaſily made the inſtruments of faction, becauſe a body of men ſeparated, in many reſpects, from the reſt of the nation, conſtrained to different cuſtoms, and in ſome meaſure ſubjected to different laws, may be eaſily perſuaded that they have a different intereſt. Let us conclude that theſe caſuiſts in red are the moſt dangerous in this reſpect, that having ſwords by their ſides, they are able at once to cut thoſe Gordian knots, which others muſt untie by degrees. But let us conclude, at the ſame time, that if a ſpirit of liberty be kept up in a free nation, it will be kept up in the army of that nation; and that when it is thus kept up, though the ſpirit of faction may do great hurt, it cannot compleat the public ruin. We ſee the truth of this obſervation exemplified near three centuries ago; and let us remember, with gratitude, that the ſame truth was again confirmed to us no longer ago than two and forty years.

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LETTER IX.

ONE of the hiſtorians of Britanny, if I remember right, and I think it is Argentre, ſays, the people of that duchy grew ſo much tired with the diſputes between Charles of Blois and the Monforts, that the two parties agreed, juſt before a battle, to make an end of the quarrel at once, by taking off that prince againſt whom the fortune of the day ſhould declare itſelf. Our anceſtors were very far from following this example; but they ſeized the opportunity, which was preſented to them, after Richard the third had uſurped the throne, and murdered his nephews, of aboliſhing tyranny and extinguiſhing faction.

The Princes of York and Lancaſter butchered one another in ſuch a manner, that the right of the former centered in Elizabeth, the eldeſt daughter of Edward the fourth, and the pretenſions of the latter were allowed, by the whole Lancaſtrian party, to belong to the Earl of Richmond. This was the ſtate of the families.

The faction of York deteſted Richard for his uſurpation and cruelties. The faction of Lancaſter hated him for his name; and neither the great qualities, which he really had, nor the good qualities which he affected, could reconcile mankind to his barbarity. This was the temper of the nation.

The opportunity, thus formed, was improved by the univerſal concurrence, which a ſpirit of liberty

and a regard to the public good, independent of party, inſpired. The faction of York became willing to receive a king of the houſe of Lancaſter; and the party of Lancaſter a queen of the houſe of York. All parties laboured to unite the two roſes; and faction itſelf was bent, in this fortunate conjuncture, to extirpate faction.

The depoſition of Richard, and the advancement of the Earl of Richmond to the throne, upon this expreſs condition, that he ſhould marry the Princeſs Elizabeth, were purſued with ſucceſs, even when Richard thought himſelf moſt ſecure; when the parliament had been obliged to confirm his uſurpation; to declare the children of Edward baſtards; and to attaint the Earl of Richmond.

What a ſcene of national peace and proſperity was opened by this revolution and new ſettlement! But how ſoon was it ſhifted? How ſoon were the wiſe and honeſt views of the many defeated by the cunning and iniquity of the few? Henry the ſeventh, a creature of the people, (if ever any prince was ſuch) had been raiſed to the throne, in order to cut up the roots of faction; to reſtore public tranquillity; and to eſtabliſh a legal government on the ruins of tyranny. He did the very reverſe of all this. His reign and that of his ſon have been two of the ſevereſt under which our country hath groaned ſince the conqueſt; and yet, in theſe very reigns, the foundations of liberty were laid much broader and ſtronger than ever. How this came about, it muſt be uſeful, and perhaps it may be entertaining, to conſider.

Henry the ſeventh, who would have been glad, a little before, to have aſſured himſelf of the crown on any terms, grew difficult as ſoon as he had obtained it.

it. He durſt not avow a title by conqueſt; but he evaded the appearances of a parliamentary title very induſtriouſly, and made the ceremony of his coronation precede the meeting of his parliament. He evaded, in the ſame manner, the appearances of any communication of right from the Princeſs Elizabeth, by deferring his marriage till an act had paſſed to ſettle the crown on him and his poſterity, without any mention of the houſe of York. In ſhort, his whole ſkill, credit, and power were employed to get the act of ſettlement ſo generally and ſo ambiguouſly penned, as to leave him room to aſſert afterwards a right inherent in himſelf, and independent of the authority of parliament. Nay, he went farther; for, in the bull of confirmation, which he obtained from the Pope, and in which he affected to have all ſorts of titles enumerated, he took particular care to have that of conqueſt inſerted.

Such a conduct gave ſufficient reaſon for alarm; but we do not find that it was taken. The tyrant was dead; and the new eſtabliſhment was made. The nation was overjoyed; and the work of liberty was done by halves. The new king found a compliance with all his meaſures, as new kings generally do. But little reflection was made, perhaps, at that time, on theſe proceedings of the court; or, if a juſt reflection was made, we may eaſily believe that it was ſoon ſtifled by that adulation, which repreſents the moſt neceſſary precautions, the moſt juſt complaints, and the aſſertion of the cleareſt rights as proofs of diſſaffection.

The whole courſe of Henry the ſeventh's reign was anſwerable to theſe beginnings; and he ſeems to have eſtabliſhed himſelf in the power of purſuing principles

principles of government, evidently repugnant to thoſe, upon which he had been raiſed to the throne, before the nation was well aware of what he intended. He planted faction anew, and was the true cauſe of all the diſturbances, which followed from it, and which began even in the firſt year of his reign. Many of the York party had ſignalized themſelves in his cauſe. All of them ſubmitted to his government; and that ſmall branch of this party, which had ſupported Richard the third, was too inconſiderable to hurt him; but he ſoon made it conſiderable, by driving almoſt the whole York party into that intereſt. "He had conceived, ſays "Rapin, ſo mortal an hatred for the whole houſe "of York, that he let ſlip no opportunity to hum-"ble the Yorkiſts; behaving always towards them "not as a juſt king, but like the head of a party."

That ſome of his miniſters, of the Lancaſtrian party, might find their private account in ſuch a meaſure, and ſacrifice to it both the intereſt of their maſter and their country, is obvious enough; but how the king, who was certainly an able man, could prefer dividing, inſtead of uniting his people in affection and obedience, would appear very marvellous, if experience had not taught us, that men of the greateſt genius fall ſometimes into the ſame errors, as men of the leaſt genius would be apt to commit in the ſame circumſtances. How this happens, we are not, in this place to enquire.

Henry the ſeventh proceeded as he had been ſuffered to ſet out, and eſtabliſhed by degrees, and thoſe not ſlow, a power almoſt abſolute. His jealouſy, his pride, and his inſatiable, ſordid avarice had their full ſwing. He became hated even by his own party,

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and might very probably have loſt his crown, if many circumſtances, both at home and abroad had not conſpired in his favour, and if he had not improved them all with the utmoſt ability of council and dexterity of management. The chief of theſe circumſtances, and it well deſerves to be remarked, was this; they, who ventured their eſtates and lives in ſeveral inſurrections againſt him, and they, who privately fomented theſe inſurrections, inſtead of uniting on a national principle, and bending their endeavours to a reformation of government, united on a principle of faction; for the King's behaviour had revived this ſpirit, as we obſerved above; but ſtill this ſpirit, though revived, had not attained its former ſtrength. The nation in general was tired of faction; dreaded a relapſe into the conſequences of it; and would not engage for a Simnel, a Warbeck, or even a real prince of the houſe of York. A national coolneſs, on the one ſide, and vigilance and vigour on the King's part, defeated all theſe enterprizes, as faſt as they were formed. Every one of theſe defeats gave Henry additional ſtrength and increaſe of reputation, which is ſtrength in its effects. Thus it happened in this caſe; and thus it hath happened in many others. By making an ill uſe of his power, the King was the real author of all the diſorders in the ſtate, and of all the attempts againſt his government; and yet, the better to prevent ſuch diſorders, and to reſiſt ſuch attempts, farther powers were entruſted to him. Becauſe he had governed ill, it was put in his power to govern worſe; and liberty was undetermined, for fear it ſhould be overthrown. It hath fared ſometimes with monarchy as with the church of Rome. Both have acquired greater

greater wealth and power by the abuſe of what they had, and mankind have been egregiouſly the bubbles of both.

We muſt not however conclude that this King made force the ſole, though he made it the principal expedient of his government. He was wiſe enough to conſider that his court was not the nation; and that however he might command with a nod in one, he muſt captivate, at leaſt in ſome degree, the good will of mankind, to make himſelf ſecure of being long obeyed in the other; nay more, that he muſt make his people ſome amends for the oppreſſions, which his avarice particularly expoſed them to ſuffer. For theſe reaſons, as he ſtrained his prerogative, on ſome occaſions, very high; ſo he let it down again upon others, and affected to ſhew to his parliaments much condeſcenſion, notwithſtanding his pride, as well as much communication of counſels, notwithſtanding his reſerve.

To attribute to this Solomon of Great Britain, the ſole merit of the laws, made in his time, as ſome have done, ſeems unreaſonable; but it was certainly great merit in him, and we may add, rare merit, inſtead of oppoſing, or refuſing, conſtantly to remunerate his people, by promoting and paſſing of good laws, which evermore were his retribution for treaſure. Theſe are my Lord Bacon's words, and better than his cannot be found to expreſs the general character of the laws, which the wiſdom of thoſe times produced. "They were deep and not vul-
"gar; not made upon the ſpur of a particular oc-
"caſion for the preſent; but out of providence of
"the future, to make the eſtate of the people ſtill
"more and more happy, after the manner of the
"legiſla-

" legiſlators in the ancient and heroical times." Huſbandry, manufactures, general commerce, and increaſe of uſeful people were carefully attended to, and conſiderably advanced; ſo that whilſt the weight of taxes and the vexations of Empſon Dudley, and their ſubordinate harpies were ſeverely felt, every man felt likewiſe the particular benefit which he received in the general advantages procured to the nation. Theſe drops of manna, which fell from the throne, ſoftened the murmurs of the people. They could not make the King beloved; but they made him leſs hated; and the middle and lower ranks of men, who felt leſs the rigour of his government, felt more immediately the effects of his care and his wiſdom.

We will not refine ſo much as to ſay, that the commons were patient under the preſſures of this reign, becauſe they foreſaw the conſequences of thoſe meaſures, which the King took to leſſen the power of his nobility. He did not, perhaps, himſelf diſcern theſe conſequences in their full extent; but ſurely if this part of his conduct was politic, it was no leſs popular at that time; ſince the ſame exorbitant power of the peers, which had been ſo formidable to the crown, had not been leſs oppreſſive to the commons. The weight of perſonal ſervice had been terribly felt, during the wars of York and Lancaſter; and the obligation of that tenure had, no doubt, contributed to prolong them. The tenant therefore, who found this ſervice commuted into a rent, could not but think his condition mended, and be extremely pleaſed with this alteration, though he did not ſee the conſequences of the other; which,

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by opening a way to the lords to alienate their lands, opened a way to the commons to increaſe their property, and conſequently their power in the ſtate; as may be very eaſily obſerved in the ſucceeding reigns.

LETTER

LETTER X.

HENRY the eighth came to the crown with very great advantages. Whatever objection had been made to his father's title, there remained no pretence of objecting to his; and if any pretence had remained, the diſpoſition to make uſe of it would not have been found. The nation was grown weary of faction; fond of tranquillity; and every day more and more attentive to the arts of peace. The prerogative had been extended wide, and carried high; and the means employed, to acquire and maintain this authority, had been eſtabliſhed by a reign of twenty four years. The treaſures, which Henry the ſeventh had accumulated and left to his ſon, were immenſe; and in leaving him theſe treaſures, he left him that, which was more valuable than all of them. He left him an opportunity of gaining the affections of his people, on his acceſſion to the throne, by putting a ſtop to that public rapine, which had been ſo long exerciſed; and by diſgracing and puniſhing thoſe, who had been the principal inſtruments of it. Henry the eighth ſeized the opportunity and improved it. He confirmed, in the firſt moments of his reign, that pardon, which his father had granted in the laſt of his life, and when he could hope for no farther profit by not pardoning. He invited, by proclamation, ſuch as had been wronged to complain, and promiſed them ſatisfaction.

If Henry the eighth had been avaricious or weak enough to prefer wealth to popularity, he would have obſerved another conduct. He would have thought thoſe men fitteſt to ſerve him, who had ſignalized themſelves moſt in fleecing the people; and without any regard to their ability in playing the game of ſtateſmen, he would have choſen them purely for their ſkill in packing the cards. Empſon and Dudley would have continued in power, and have riſen in favour. But he was too wiſe, or too honeſtly counſelled in theſe beginnings of his government, to purſue ſuch meaſures, or to employ ſuch miniſters. He kept ſome in his council; who were of approved abilities; but far from loading his own adminiſtration with the principal guilt of the former; far from grieving or provoking his people, by countenancing the moſt hated, and the moſt juſtly hated, men of the whole kingdom, he threw thoſe criminals out of the ſanctuary of the court, and expoſed them to that national vengeance, under the weight of which they periſhed. The manner, in which their lives were taken away, ſeems liable to great objection, and I would not be thought to approve it; for a ſpirit of liberty can never approve ſuch proceedings, even againſt the worſt and the moſt guilty of men, as may be applied to deſtroy the beſt and the moſt innocent. All I mean to commend is the wiſdom of Henry the eighth, in abandoning theſe miniſters; in gaining the affections of his ſubjects; and in making ſuch impreſſions of gratitude in their minds, as laſted long, and were of ſervice to him, even when he oppreſſed the people in his turn.

Vanity

Vanity and preſumption were reigning qualities in the character of this prince. The firſt betrayed him into continual errors. The laſt made him perſiſt in them. Pride is obſerved to defeat its own end, by bringing the man, who ſeeks eſteem and reverence, into contempt. Vanity, ſelf-ſufficiency, preſumption (the offspring of pride) have much the ſame effect; ſince no one is ſo liable to be deceived and governed as he, who imagines that he is capable of neither.

The characters of the princes and popes, of this age, rendered the ſcene of foreign affairs very important. Henry the eighth was happy enough to have no intereſt of his own abroad worth engaging him in the broils of the continent. He was free from guaranties of foreign dominions, and from all engagements to foreign princes, which could in the leaſt incumber him. In this ſtate he might have kept himſelf with equal dignity and advantage. He might have encreaſed his ſtrength, whilſt other princes waſted theirs. He might have been applied to as the mediator, or arbitrator of the Chriſtian world; and have found his account in all the wars and negotiations, without being a party in them. He did the very contrary. A roſe, bleſſed by the Pope; an emperor ſerving in his army, and taking his pay; a whimſical project of conqueſts, never deſigned to be made, and impoſſible to be kept, if they had been made, were ſufficient to draw him into the moſt extravagant engagements; in which he always played gold againſt counters with allies, who generally played counters againſt gold. His engagements of this kind, became numberleſs, frequently inconſiſtent, and ſo very raſh and unadviſ-

ed, that whilſt his aim or his pretence, was to keep a balance between the great powers of Europe, he more than once aſſiſted the ſtrongeſt to oppreſs the weakeſt. The ſpring of all this ſtrange conduct lay in the private intereſts and paſſions of Wolſey, who became his firſt miniſter very early, and was his favourite earlier. If Henry the eighth negotiated perpetually, and was perpetually the bubble of thoſe, with whom and for whom he negotiated, this happened chiefly becauſe he was, in the firſt place, the bubble of his miniſter. Wolſey's avarice was fed, and his ambition flattered by the Emperor, by the court of France, and by that of Rome, in their turns. He ſupported himſelf, in great meaſure, at home by the opinion of his credit abroad; and his maſter's favour to him was ſtrengthened by the art of thoſe, whom he ſerved at his maſter's and his country's expence. In ſhort, the ſucceſs or diſappointment of his private ſchemes were the hinges on which the whole policy of this nation turned for twenty years; and the groſſeſt miſmanagement, obſtinately purſued, by the miniſter, in the midſt of univerſal diſapprobation, was ſanctified by the king.

The King, no doubt, thought himſelf as infallible in the choice of men, as in the choice of meaſures; and therefore when he had once given his confidence to Wolſey, no matter by what inducements, his preſumption ſkreened the miniſter from his ſuſpicion.

It was eaſy for Wolſey to keep his maſter from hearkening to particular advice, or to the general voice of the people; becauſe it was eaſy to perſuade him that he wanted no advice; that he could not be deceived, though his people might; and, perhaps,

haps, that it was unbecoming a great prince to alter his meaſures, or withdraw his favour, on the clamours of the public. At the ſame time, we may fairly ſuppoſe (for the monuments of hiſtory will juſtify us in ſuppoſing) that the butcher's ſon was not ſuch a bungler, nor rendered, by a low education, ſo void of addreſs, as not to know how to inſinuate without the air of adviſing; and how to receive all his own ſuggeſtions back from his maſter, in the ſtile of orders, with the utmoſt demonſtration of implicit ſubmiſſion to his judgment, and abſolute reſignation to his will.

But however blind the King might be, the eyes of the people continued open to his and their true intereſt. The diſcontent grew general; and to this general diſcontent were owing the principal difficulties, which Henry the eighth met with, during the firſt half of his reign. As much complaiſance as he had been uſed to find in his parliaments, he durſt not always demand money of them, for the ſupport of his enterpriſes. His miniſter ſoon put him upon the expedient of raiſing it by his own authority. But theſe attempts were reſented warmly, and oppoſed ſo ſturdily, even when the rough name of a tax was changed into the ſofter ſound of a benevolence, that the King was obliged to retract; to compound; to excuſe himſelf; to diſavow his miniſter; and to pardon all thoſe, who had been concerned in particular inſurrections, from a fear of one which might become univerſal.

No prince could be more firmly ſeated on his throne. No prince could be leſs framed to brook oppoſition. No prince could be leſs ſuſceptible of fear. And yet to this point of diſtreſs did Henry

the eighth bring himſelf, by truſting his firſt miniſter too much, and regarding the ſenſe of his people too little. All orders of men concurred on theſe occaſions, and the merchants ſignalized themſelves. Neither the flattery nor the menaces of Wolſey could prevail on them to be ſilent, when they felt that their own and the national intereſts were ſacrificed, or neglected, at every turn. Much leſs could they be cozened ſo far, as to expoſe their fortunes in trade, (the only fortunes which merchants acquired in thoſe days), in order to conceal the blunder of a miniſter, or to ſtop the clamour againſt him. We find a remarkable inſtance of this behaviour of the merchants in the year 1528; when the commerce of the Low Countries, on which our woollen trade depended principally at that time, was interrupted by a war with the Emperor, which evidently took its riſe from no other motive than a pique of the miniſter.

The ill ſucceſs of theſe illegal methods obliged the King to have recourſe to his parliament; but his parliament thought like his people; and the oppoſition given in the houſe of Commons was ſuch as became the repreſentative body of the nation. That which happened in the year 1523, is worthy of particular obſervation. It was not grounded only on the exorbitancy of the ſum demanded, but likewiſe on the nature of the ſervice for which the demand was made. As high as prerogative was carried at this time; and as undiſputed a point as the power of the crown to make war and peace might be; yet it is undeniable that the commons would not give money, without knowing how it was to be employed; and that they proportioned their

their grants to the judgment they made of the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the employment designed. Wolsey, the most insolent minister our nation had seen at that time, was however so far from objecting to this method of proceeding in the house of commons, that he opened to that house, in a long discourse, the reasons of the King's measures, as he affected to call his own measures; and endeavoured to prove the necessity of supporting them. Nay, when neither his rhetoric could persuade, nor his authority influence, he offered to debate the whole matter, and to answer the objections of those who opposed the King's desires. The house rejected his offer; observed their forms; maintained their dignity. They disapproved a war wantonly undertaken, and in which the interests of the nation were not concerned. They shewed however their regard to the King, by giving some part of the subsidy, and their regard to the kingdom, by refusing to the last to give the whole.

As for the minister, he received the mortification which he deserved. These frequent oppositions, on the part of the people and the parliament, were really made to the minister. Henry the eighth, seemed, on some occasions, to desire that they should be so understood, even before Wolsey's favour began to be in it's wain; and yet we shall have no reason to be surprised, if we consider the true character of this prince, that these very oppositions prepared his mind, for receiving those lessons which Wolsey was ready to give him, against liberty, and in favour of arbitrary power. A wicked minister, who neither gains nor deserves to gain, the good will of a nation, must secure, and will endeavour

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to revenge himself, by persuading his master to neglect it. Force and corruption being the sole means by which he can maintain his power, and preserve his ill-gotten wealth, it is necessary for him, that the prince whom he serves should look upon those as the sole expedients, by which government can be supported. Wolsey pursued this abominable scheme. "He looked upon the King's subjects, says Rapin, as so many slaves; and unfortunately for them, he inspired the King by degrees with the same principles; and insinuated to him, that he ought to consider the parliament only as an instrument to execute his will." These were the seeds he sowed, which fell on rank soil, and produced, in the latter half of Henry's reign, such bitter fruit as the nation never tasted before nor since. Wolsey had been the scandal and the scourge of his country, whilst he lived; and he continued to be so even in the grave.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

THE divorce of Henry the eighth and Katharine of Arragon begins a new and moſt memorable æra in the general hiſtory of England; and indeed of all Europe. It is the beginning likewiſe of a new period, in the particular reign of which we are ſpeaking. A king, who had been till now the great aſſertor of the authority of the Pope, and the great defender of the doctrine of the church of Rome, undertakes to deſtroy the former in his dominions, and gives ſeveral incurable wounds to the latter. A king, whoſe whole attention had been employed abroad, and in whoſe time "there was no treaty, "and almoſt conventicle, in Chriſtendom, wherein "he had not his particular agent and intereſt," (as my Lord Herbert expreſſes himſelf) becomes wholly taken up with domeſtic affairs; and if he looks abroad during the reſt of his life, it is chiefly on account of what paſſes at home. He, who had connived at ſeditions, and pardoned inſurrections, grows impatient of the leaſt contradiction. He, who had often compounded with his parliaments, and ſubmitted to them on many occaſions, dictates all their proceedings; and the voice of the law is little elſe than the echo of the voice of the King. In ſhort, he who had been led, amuſed, governed, by his miniſter, drives, overbears, tyrannizes; butchers his ſervants and his wives, his commons and his nobility.

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When Henry the eighth firſt engaged in the affair of the divorce, he could not foreſee the conſequences of it; becauſe he certainly did not expect the difficulties which gave occaſion to them. He went on, during the two firſt years, in the beaten road, by which ſo many others had gone before to the ſame end; and he ſeemed to have no views beſides that of employing the authority of one Pope to undo what the authority of another Pope had done. Nay, after Cranmer had begun to open other views to him, he ſeemed ſtill to cling to Rome; reſolved to ſucceed any way, but deſirous to ſucceed that way. Happy was it that he took his meaſures no better, and that he was no better ſerved on this occaſion than on many others! He ſuffered himſelf to be amuſed by Clement the ſeventh, the leaſt ſcrupulous man alive, and who would have divorced him, or have done any other pontifical job for him, if the league formed to reduce the Emperor's power in Italy had ſucceeded. But the Emperor's power there continuing to prevail, the Pope concluded his treaty with this prince on the moſt advantageous terms. He obtained that favourite point for which he would have ſacrificed, not only the intereſts of Henry the eighth, but even thoſe of the papacy itſelf; I mean the re-eſtabliſhment of the family of Medicis on the ruins of the Florentine liberty. The loſs of Genoa, the total deſtruction of the French army in the kingdom of Naples, and ſeveral other conſiderations, induced Francis the firſt to make his peace with the Emperor likewiſe, and to ſubmit to the treaty of Cambray.

Thus did Henry the eighth find himſelf at once diſappointed in the expectations he had been made

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to entertain from the court of Rome, and deſtitute of all foreign aſſiſtance; Francis being the only ally of whom he could avail himſelf to influence the councils of Rome, in oppoſition to the Emperor.

In this ſtate of affairs, Henry reſorted to that which will be always the beſt and ſureſt reſerve of a King of Great Britain; the inclinations and affections of his people. He had not the trouble of diſpoſing them, for he found them already diſpoſed to his purpoſes. The ſpirit raiſed by Wickliffe, about two centuries before, againſt the uſurpations of the Pope and the clergy, was ſtill alive. The ſufferings of the Lollards, as his followers were called, had not abated it. The art of printing had been propagated, and the late ſucceſs of Luther had encouraged it. There were multitudes, therefore, in all parts of the kingdom, who deſired a compleat reformation of the church, both in doctrine and in diſcipline. Others again were content that the papal authority, grievous in its nature, and ſcandalous in its exerciſe, as well as the extravagant power and impertinent immunities of the clergy, ſhould be taken away. But they meant to go no farther. Many would not go even ſo far as this; but were ſtill ſlaves to all their prejudices; and remained, in the midſt of this defection, attached to the Pope, as well as to the corrupted doctrine, and the depraved diſcipline of the church.

Whilſt the divorce was ſolicited at Rome, and the proceedings relating to it were carried on by the direction, and under the authority of the Pope, it was the King's affair, it was the affair of his miniſters. But when it appeared impracticable in this method,

method, and Henry reſolved, in order to accompliſh it in another, to deliver himſelf and his people from the yoke of Rome, the affair of the divorce became a national affair, and the cauſe of the King became the cauſe of his ſubjects. As he proceeded in it he was encouraged to proceed. The concurrence of his people grew every day more general, and he was ſupported with the greateſt warmth. He ſoon held the clergy at his mercy, and the Popiſh party was broken and terrified, if not entirely cruſhed.

During this eager purſuit after eccleſiaſtical liberty, a power very dangerous to civil liberty was erected. We obſerved before, that the prerogative had been carried high, and extended wide in the reign of Henry the ~~eighth~~ seventh, who obtained much by law, and obtained more by his manner of conſtruing and executing the law. His ſon, parting with none of his authority, and improving the conjuncture ſo as to acquire a great deal more, acquired ſo much at laſt, that the power of the crown exceeded by far that proportion which is conſiſtent with the ſecurity of public liberty and private property. It is true indeed, that he always took care to have the law on his ſide; and would neither venture on the exerciſe of acts of power againſt it, or without it. His experience, in the former part of his reign, had taught him the danger of ſuch a conduct; and, in the latter part, he had no occaſion to purſue it. The opinion of the nation went along with him now; and, as exorbitant as his demands frequently were, his parliaments refuſed him nothing. At one time they gave up to him, in a great degree, the legiſlative authority; and his proclamations were made, under ſome reſtrictions, equivalent

lent to acts of parliament. At another time they aſcribed to him a ſort of infallibility, and letters patent under the great ſeal, were neceſſary to determine the articles of faith which men were to believe fully, and the doctrines, rites, and ceremonies which they were to obſerve and practiſe, under ſevere penalties. The ſuſpicious ſtate of affairs abroad was amplified, to give a pretence to one of theſe laws; and the confuſed ſtate of religion at home, and the claſhing of parties about it, might afford ſome colour to the other. The truth is, that any pretence ſerved, at this time, to grant whatever the King deſired; a ſtronger inſtance of which cannot be imagined than that of the ſubſidy, obtained in the year 1540. Henry had got immenſe riches by the firſt and ſecond ſuppreſſion of monaſteries. A principal inducement to the laſt, which was likewiſe the greateſt, was this, that the King might be enabled, without taxing the people, to defend them againſt ſuch invaſions, as the court had been pleaſed to ſuppoſe, and with the rumours of which the nation had been purpoſely alarmed. Theſe invaſions did not happen. Henry continued in peace with all his neighbours; and yet, the very next year, he not only accepted from the clergy of the province of Canterbury, with the approbation of parliament, a grant of the fifth part of their revenue; but he demanded a ſubſidy likewiſe of the houſe of commons. So extravagant a demand could not but meet with ſome oppoſition. The ſubſidy however was granted in as large a proportion as if the nation had been engaged in a dangerous war. The reaſons for granting it were almoſt burleſque. It was affirmed by the King's party, that he had laid out vaſt ſums in

ſecuring the coaſts; and that keeping his ſubjects in peace and plenty coſt him more than the moſt burthenſome war. Thus a precedent was made of converting into ordinary aids of the government, thoſe heavy taxes which ought never to be felt by the people, unleſs upon the moſt extraordinary occaſions. That they ought to be laid in time of war, neither was, nor ever could be doubted. That they were equally neceſſary in time of peace, was now eſtabliſhed by the logic of the court; and we may be ſure that the argument would have been urged with ſtill more force and effect, if the nation had fallen, by the management of the courtiers in that age, into ſuch a ſituation as could neither be called properly a ſtate of war or a ſtate of peace.

The abſolute power which Henry the eighth exerciſed over the purſes, lives, liberties, and conſciences of his people, was due to the entire influence which he had gained over the parliament; and this dependency of the two houſes on the King, did, in effect, eſtabliſh tyranny by law. If we look for the true cauſe of this dependency, we ſhall find it, as Rapin hath very judiciouſly obſerved, in thoſe diviſions of the nation concerning religion, which I have mentioned above. The party which oppoſed all reformation, by a bigotted attachment to the diſcipline, as well as doctrine of the church of Rome, furniſhed the King with as many pretences for graſping at power, and ſqueezing money out of his people, as ambition could wiſh, or profuſion require. The other two parties concurred with the King, and went together to a certain point; that is, to throw off the papal yoke, and to leſſen the power of the clergy. But here they ſeparated, and went different ways;

ways; one to carry the reformation forward, and the other to ſtop it where it then ſtood; whilſt the King ſeemed to keep in a middle way between both. Sometimes he ſeemed to favour thoſe, whoſe principles led them to an entire reformation, and he touched the doctrine, tho' with a gentler hand, than the diſcipline of the church. Sometimes he appeared zealous for the doctrine, and even for ſome part of the diſcipline; and the manner in which he often executed that bloody ſtatute, the law of the ſix articles, would incline one to think, that he joined to his political conſiderations a tincture of religious prejudice on theſe heads. But, however that was, certain it is, that the hopes which each of theſe two parties entertained of the King and the fears which they entertained of one another, occaſioned their continual bidding for him, if I may be allowed the expreſſion. This emulation formed then, what it always muſt form, the moſt dangerous conjuncture to which liberty can be expoſed. When the motives of contending parties are founded on private ambition and avarice, the danger is great. How much greater muſt it be, when theſe motives are founded on religion likewiſe; when the heads and hearts of both ſides are heated even to enthuſiaſm; when this ſpirit mingles itſelf with the ſpirit of faction; ſo that ſome through folly, and ſome through knavery, are ready to ſacrifice public liberty to their particular ſchemes of religion?

In ſuch circumſtances as theſe was this nation, when Henry the eighth died; and if he had left a ſon and ſucceſſor of full age, and bold and enterprizing like himſelf, our liberties had been irretrievably loſt, according to all appearances. Henry the

eighth, by applying to his parliaments for the extraordinary powers which he excerciſed, and by taking theſe powers for ſuch terms, and under ſuch reſtrictions as the parliament impoſed, owned indeed ſufficiently, that they did not belong of right to the crown. He owned likewiſe, in effect, more than any prince who went before him, how abſolutely the diſpoſition of the crown of England belongs to the people of England, by procuring ſo many different and oppoſite ſettlements of it to be made in parliament; and yet tyranny was actually eſtabliſhed. The freedom of our government might flouriſh in ſpeculation, but certainly it did not ſubſiſt in practice. In the caſe therefore ſuppoſed above, our forefathers would very ſoon have found how fatal it is, in any circumſtances, by any means, or under any pretences, to admit encroachments on the conſtitution; and how vain it is, when theſe encroachments are once admitted, for the ſervice of ſome preſent turn, to preſcribe limitations to the exerciſe or duration of them.

But providence directed the courſe of things better, and broke thoſe ſhackles which we had forged for ourſelves. A minority followed this turbulent reign; the government was weak, the governors divided, and the temper of the people ſuch as made it prudent to ſooth them. This the Duke of Somerſet did, out of inclination, and the Duke of Northumberland out of policy. To the former we owe not only the compleat eſtabliſhment of the church of England, on the ruins of popery, but the firſt and great ſteps which were made to reſtore a free government. In the very firſt year of his

his adminiſtration, ſeveral acts which had paſſed in the reign of Henry the eighth, and in ſome preceding reigns, grievous to the people, and deſtructive of liberty, were repealed; and among others that abſurd act, which gave to proclamations the force of laws. The law of the ſix articles was likewiſe repealed. Others were explained, and ſeveral new laws were made in favour of civil, as well as eccleſiaſtical liberty; both of which got ſo much ſtrength in the reign of Edward the ſixth, that they were able to ſtand the ſhort but violent ſhock of Queen Mary's reign. This princeſs lived long enough to confirm, not to deſtroy our religion by perſecution. The ill concerted inſurrection of Wyat gave ſtrength to the faction which prevailed at court, and diſcouraged, for ſome time, all oppoſition; nay, the methods taken to influence elections, and to gain by corruption the members who were choſen, were carried on ſo openly, that the price for which each man ſold himſelf was publicly known. No wonder then if the papal authority was reſtored, and the Queen's marriage with Philip the ſecond approved. But this ſtate of things could not laſt long, nor was the nation diſpoſed to bear a continual ſacrifice of her intereſt to Rome and Spain.

The parliament, corrupt as it was, began to revolt againſt the court. The ſpirit of liberty revived; and that ſpirit, and the ſpirit of reformation in religion, had made more progreſs than was readily perceived. This progreſs had been made principally among the commons; and therefore, though the authority of the crown, of the council, and of the great lords, kept up other appearances, yet there

was a ſecret fire burning, which muſt, and would have broke out. The effects of the cauſes, laid in the reign of Henry the ſeventh, began now to appear. The lands of the nobility were leſſened, and thoſe of the commons increaſed. Trade had been encouraged for ſeveral years. We ſee that ſome care had been taken of it, even in the troubleſome times of Edward the fourth, and very much was done towards the advancement of it in the reigns of Henry the ſeventh, and Henry the eighth. The Weſt Indies had been diſcovered about half a century before, and part of the immenſe treaſures which flowed from thence into Europe, began to increaſe the profits; and, increaſing the profits, to increaſe the induſtry of our merchants. Henry the eighth had ſold a very great part of the church lands at low prices, on purpoſe to engage the body of the nation in one common intereſt, againſt the Romiſh clergy. The commons had made their uſe of this ſtrain of policy, and had got into the very eſtates in lands, by theſe as well as by other means; ſo that the King, the Lords, and the church, who had formerly held ſo great an overbalance of property in land, had now little more than one third of the whole belonging to them, the conſequences of which were not foreſeen by Queen Mary; neither did ſhe live long enough to feel them in any great degree. They did not eſcape the penetration of her ſiſter. She foreſaw them, and the great glory and happineſs of her reign may juſtly be attributed to this firſt principle, that ſhe had wiſdom to diſcern, not only the actual alteration which was already made, but the growing alteration, which would every

very day increaſe in the ſtate, of property; that ſhe accommodated at once the whole ſyſtem of her government to this great change; and inſtead of depending upon expedients, which were now no longer of ſeaſon, choſe the ſole expedient that remained, for making herſelf and her people happy; which was to place the whole ſtrength and ſecurity of her government in the affections of her people, and in her ſuperior credit with them.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

WE have now brought theſe remarks on the Engliſh hiſtory not only down to times little remote from our own; but to a period, when the monarchy ſettled on a new foundation; upon which it ſtill continues. and reſts more firmly than ever at this hour. The obſervations therefore, which remain to be made, in order to illuſtrate what hath been advanced, concerning the ſpirit of liberty and the ſpirit of faction, will for theſe reaſons be the more appoſite, the more affecting, and by conſequence the more uſeful; but for theſe very reaſons likewiſe, it is probable that they will become the occaſions of louder complaints, and of more impertinent clamour. We ſhall be ſincerely ſorry for this; becauſe we look on the alarm, which hath been taken at our endeavours to revive the ſpirit, and to confirm and propagate the doctrines of liberty, in a country where liberty is ſtill avowed, and under a government eſtabliſhed on the principles of liberty, as a moſt ſuſpicious and melancholy ſymptom. But the ſtronger this ſymptom appears, the more incumbent we ſhall think it upon us to purſue the honeſt deſign, to which we have devoted ourſelves with conſtancy and vigour.

The ſhameleſs crew, who write againſt their country, as they would write againſt their God, for hire, ſhall have little regard from us. The ſcandalous licence, with which they have preſumed to draw odious parallels, and the impudence with which

which they have imputed theſe parallels to us, have been abundantly expoſed already. The few, the very few things, which they have alledged in point of fact, or argument, have been often anſwered; perhaps too often, conſidering how little weight they carried with them, and how little impreſſion they were capable of making on the underſtanding even of thoſe, who had other reaſons for inclining to that ſide of the queſtion. The ribaldry, which thoſe ſcribblers employ, hath been, and will continue to be deſpiſed, not anſwered. It cannot be expected that we ſhould take notice of every little, frivolous, childiſh declamation, which appears in public, however ſome perſons may demean themſelves by pretending to admire them. The menaces, affectedly and inſolently thrown out on one ſide, and the flattery ſervilely offered on the other, are equally objects of our contempt; and if we take a little notice of the former, once for all, before we proceed any farther in theſe remarks, it is purely becauſe we cannot underſtand them to be the language of theſe writers. When they talk in this ſtyle, they ſpeak the language of *him*, who guides their pens, and who is known to reward their labours. To him therefore it may not be improper to addreſs ourſelves in the following manner.

" The perſons, whom you threaten, Sir, neither value your favour, nor fear your anger. Whenever you attempt any act of power againſt any of them, you ſhall find that you have to do with men, who know they have not offended the law; and therefore truſt they have not offended the King; who know they are ſafe, as long as the laws and liberties of their country are ſo; and who are ſo little

little deſirous of being ſafe any longer, that they would be the firſt to bury themſelves in the ruins of the Britiſh conſtitution, if you, or any miniſter, as deſperate as you, ſhould be able to deſtroy it. But let us aſk, on this occaſion, what you are, who thus preſume to threaten? Are you not one, whoſe meaſure of folly and iniquity is full; who can neither hold, nor quit his power with impunity; and over whoſe head the long gathering cloud of national vengeance is ready to burſt? Is it not time for you, Sir, inſtead of threatening to attack others, to conſider how ſoon you may be attacked yourſelf? How many crimes may be charged upon you and yours, which almoſt every man can prove; and how many more are ready to ſtart into light, as ſoon as the power, by which you now conceal them, ſhall determine? When next you meditate revenge on your adverſaries, remember this truth. The laws muſt be deſtroyed, before they can ſuffer, or you eſcape."

Let us now return to our ſubject. In the early days of our government, after the Norman invaſion, the commons of England were rather formidable in their collective, than conſiderable in their repreſentative body; by their numbers in extraordinary emergencies, rather than by their weight in the ordinary courſe of government. In later days, they began to acquire ſome of this weight by degrees. They repreſented grievances; they gave, or refuſed ſubſidies; and they exerciſed, in a regular, ſenatorial manner, the powers lodged in them by the conſtitution; but ſtill they did not obtain the entire weight, till they were wholly emancipated; and they were not ſo, till the great change, which we are

ſpeaking

ſpeaking of, happened. Before this time, they had too much of the dependency of tenants, and the King, the nobility, and the clergy, had too much of the ſuperiority of landlords. This dependency of commons added to that, which the crown frequently found means of creating, either by influencing their elections, or by corrupting their repreſentatives, (notwithſtanding all the proviſions made againſt it, which we have touched, in a * former letter) kept this part of the legiſlature in ſuch a ſtate, as made it unable fully to anſwer the end of its inſtitution; and the ſyſtem of our government was, by conſequence, in this reſpect defective.

Could Henry the ſeventh have found means, as he reduced the nobility lower, to have hindered the commons from riſing higher; could he have openened a war to the diminution of the property of the lords, and have prevented that increaſe of the ſame property amongſt the commons, to which, on the contrary, he gave occaſion, and which time and accidents conſpired to bring about, the balance of this government would have been totally loſt, though the outward forms of it had been preſerved. Our liberty would have been loſt by conſequence; and our kings, with an houſe of lords and an houſe of commons, and all the appearances of limited monarchs, might have been as arbitrary as thoſe princes are, who govern countries where no ſuch conſtitution prevails. The reaſon of this will appear plain to thoſe who remember what hath been obſerved, in ſome of our former letters, that a dependent exerciſe of the powers, lodged in the two houſes of

* See Letter vii.

parlia-

parliament, will endanger, and may, more effectually than any other expedient deſtroy liberty; and that the preſervation of our freedom is no way to be ſecured but by a free and independent exerciſe of theſe powers Now ſuch an exerciſe could not have continued, much leſs have been improved, if Henry the ſeventh had been able, at the ſame time, to weaken his nobility, and to keep his commons from acquiring new ſtrength. But this was impracticable. At leaſt, it was not attempted. Henry the ſeventh haſtened to the cure of that evil, which preſſed him moſt, the power of the nobility, as his ſon ſoon afterwards effectually reduced the exorbitant power of the clergy; and in pulling down theſe powers, which, as they were conſtituted and had been exerciſed, hurt the crown more than they ſerved the people, theſe princes became the inſtruments of raiſing another power which is the beſt, if not the ſole effectual barrier againſt uſurpations of illegal, and abuſes of legal prerogatives; and which, at the ſame time, can never be applied to do any real hurt to the crown, unleſs in caſes where it is bent and forced to do this hurt by the crown itſelf, in the firſt place, againſt the natural tendency and direction of it.

This increaſe of the property of the commons, by taking off from them a conſtant dependency of one ſort, and by rendering them leſs obnoxious to an occaſional dependency of another, gave greater dignity, and added greater weight, in the balance of government, to their repreſentative body. The houſe of commons became more powerful, and purely by the different manner, in which their independency, the effect of their property, enabled them to exerciſe

exercise the same powers, which they enjoyed before. A concert with a few great lords, and a few leading prelates, was now no longer sufficient to guide the sense of parliament, and to establish the measures of government; no, not even in cases where this concert might be extended to some of the commons themselves. Intrigue and cabal became unnecessary, when the national interest was wisely pursued; and ineffectual, when it was not. The way was open to gain the parliament, by gaining the nation; but to impose on the nation, by gaining the parliament was hard; for the weight without doors determined, in those days, the weight within. The same causes, which rendered the house of commons more considerable to the court, to the nobility, to the clergy, to the commons themselves, rendered likewise the whole body of the commons of more importance to those, who were chosen to represent them. Besides which, the frequency of new elections, which was deemed an advantage, as long as the service was deemed an honourable burden, gave the nation frequent opportunities of modelling the representative body, according to the interests and inclinations of the collective body. From hence it followed, that that credit and influence in the nation, which can only be acquired and preserved by adhering to the national interest, became the sole means of obtaining a lasting credit and influence in the house of commons; upon which the harmony of government, and the happiness of prince and people depended more than ever.

Thus were we brought back, in times very distant, and in circumstances very different, to the principles of government, which had prevailed a-

mongſt our Saxon anceſtors, before they left Germany. Whatever particular pre eminences or powers, were veſted in the principal men, the great affairs of ſtate were directed by the whole body of the nation. *De minoribus principes, de majoribus omnes.*

Such were the natural effects of this new ſettlement; and thus our limited monarchy became capable of as much perfection, as wiſdom and favourable accidents can communicate to any human inſtitution; for can we raiſe our ideas of this kind of perfection higher than ordering the diſtribution of property and power in ſuch a manner, that the privileges of the people and the prerogative of the crown cannot be taken away, unleſs with their own conſent, or by their own fault? Now to this point of perfection was the conſtitution of our government brought, and farther it could not be brought; becauſe it is impoſſible to ſecure either prince or people againſt themſelves, or againſt the effects of their own conduct.

One part of what hath been ſaid upon this ſubject will not, I think, be diſputed. The other, perhaps, may ſeem a paradox; and a ſettlement, which rendered the government more democratical, will not readily be allowed to have been advantageous to the crown, though it muſt be allowed to have been ſo to the people. Let us examine therefore whether it was really ſo, or not.

In all limited monarchies, and we are not ſpeaking of any other, the power of preſerving theſe limitations muſt be placed ſomewhere. The queſtion therefore is, whether it can be placed more advantageouſly, even for the crown as well as the people, than in the whole body of the nation.

Whilſt

Whilſt the commons had not property enough to have any ſhare in this power, the ſole check which could be oppoſed to the incroachments of the crown, was the power of the barons and of the clergy. But theſe two orders of men had their particular intereſts, frequently oppoſite to each other and to thoſe of the people, as well as to thoſe of the crown; ſo that they were not only very incapable of forming a ſecure barrier to liberty, but their power became terrible and dangerous to the crown itſelf. They ſlided eaſily into faction. They often incroached on the prince's authority, whilſt they reſiſted his incroachments, real or pretended, on their own privileges; and under the plauſible veil of law, or goſpel, private ambition had a greater ſhare than public liberty in their conteſts. It is true that, during theſe conteſts, Magna Charta was ſigned and confirmed; and the condition of the people in point of liberty, very much improved. But this was the accidental effect of the conteſts between the kings, the barons, and the clergy, as we have remarked in ſpeaking of thoſe times, and not the natural effect of the property and power lodged in the barons and the clergy.

The commons were courted by all ſides, becauſe they were wanted by all. Had they been bubbles enough to look on the nobility and clergy as the proper guardians of liberty, and to have adhered to them accordingly, they might indeed have avoided being ſlaves to their kings, but they would have rendered both their kings and themſelves little leſs than ſlaves to their temporal and ſpiritual lords.

After the reigns of Edward the firſt, and Edward

the third, power came to be better poized, and our government took a more regular form. The prerogatives of our kings, and the privileges of our nobility, the authority and immunity of the church, and the rights of the people were more aſcertained; and yet, after this time, the ſame obſervations will hold good in a very great degree. It is certain that the vaſt overbalance of property and power, which ſtill continued in the nobility and clergy, inſtead of preventing, ſoftening, or ſhortening the calamities which followed, helped to form and maintain thoſe factions, which began, renewed, fomented the civil wars of York and Lancaſter, as well as the wicked conduct of Richard the ſecond, and the weak conduct of Henry the ſixth. Redreſs of grievances, and ſufficient ſecurity againſt them for the future, might have ſatisfied the people, if they had been left to themſelves; but nothing leſs than revolutions of government could ſatisfy the factions, into which the great men were divided, and into which they divided the nation, by their influence over the people, and by the advantages which the ill conduct of the Yorkiſts and Lancaſtrians gave to each other.

Thus we ſee unſafely for the crown, as well as inſecurely for the people, that property and power which is neceſſary to preſerve the limitations of our monarchy, was placed before the time, when that great change in the one and the other happened, which makes the ſubject of this diſcourſe. But as ſoon as this change did happen, the crown was no longer expoſed to the ſame miſchiefs.

When the little power which Henry the fourth of France had in the town of Rochelle, was objected to him, he made an anſwer worthy of his heroic ſpirit.

ſpirit. *I do, ſaid he, all I deſire to do there, in doing nothing but what I ought.* This moderation of temper is, in all governments, the beſt; and, in limited monarchies, the only ſure and durable foundation of power. By preventing jealouſy in the people of the prince, it takes away all advantage againſt his government from faction; and the more watchful the people are over their liberties, the more ſenſible will they be of this moderation, and the more grateful for it. Faction proceeds always without reaſon; but it can hardly ever ſucceed without pretence, and ſufficient pretence will hardly be found under ſuch a government.

When a prince, who manifeſts this moderation of temper, purſues the true intereſt of his people, and ſuffers no other intereſt to come into any degree of competition with it, far from being the object of their jealouſy, he will be the principal object of their affection; and if he joins to this character of goodneſs that of ability, he will be the principal object of their confidence likewiſe. Theſe are the ſtrongeſt chains, by which a people can be bound to their prince; eaſier indeed, but far ſtronger than thoſe of adamant, by which Dionyſius the elder boaſted that he had ſecured the tyranny of Syracuſe to his ſon; *force, fear, a multitude of troops, and a guard of ten thouſand barbarians.* A prince, who eſtabliſhes his government on the principles of affection, hath every thing to hope, and nothing to fear from his people. A prince who eſtabliſhes his government on any other principles, acts in contradiction to the very end of his inſtitution. What objection therefore could be made, even on the part of the crown, to a ſettlement of property and

power, which put the guardianſhip of liberty into ſuch hands as never did, nor never will invade the prerogative and authority of the crown, whilſt they are employed to thoſe purpoſes, for which alone they were intruſted? It is confeſſed, that if a prince ſhould attempt to eſtabliſh his government on any other principle than theſe; if he ſhould chuſe to depend rather on deceiving, corrupting, or forcing his people, than on gaining their affection and confidence; he might feel the weight of their property and power very heavy in the ſcale againſt him. But then it muſt be confeſſed likewiſe, that, in ſuch caſe, this oppoſition of the people would be juſt; and that the prince, not the people, would be anſwerable to himſelf and his family, to GOD and to man, for all the ill conſequences, which might follow.

We hope that we have ſaid nothing, in order to ſhew the excellency of our conſtitution, as it ſettled about the time of Queen Elizabeth, which is not agreeable to reaſon; and ſure we are, that the truth of theſe general propoſitions will be confirmed by the particular examples which are to follow. The reign of Queen Elizabeth will be one continued proof that the power of preſerving the limitations of a monarchy cannot be placed better, for a good and wiſe prince, than in the whole body of the people; and that the ſpirit of liberty will give greater ſtrength as well as procure greater eaſe, to the government of ſuch a prince, than any abſolute monarch can hope to find in the moſt abject ſpirit, which principles of blind ſubmiſſion and paſſive obedience are capable of inſpiring. The reigns immediately ſucceeding this, will be one continued proof, that when-

whenever the power of the people hath been exerciſed againſt the crown, it hath been owing primarily to the weak management and obſtinacy of the court, and to the unhappy choice which thoſe princes made of governing by factions, in oppoſition to the ſenſe and intereſt of the nation. From hence it will follow that the great calamities, which befel our country, in the middle of the laſt century, are unjuſtly charged on the ſpirit of liberty, or on the nature of the Britiſh conſtitution of government.

LETTER XIII.

THERE is no part of our annals, nor perhaps of the annals of any other country, which deſerves to be more ſtudied, or to be oftener called to remembrance both by thoſe who govern, and by thoſe who are governed, than the reign of Queen Elizabeth. We ſhall not however deſcend into all the obſervations which it affords, nor even into all thoſe which might properly ſerve to our preſent purpoſe.

In ſome papers * we made a few remarks on this reign, and on that of King James the firſt. We apprehend that the contraſt between them appeared very ſtrong on that occaſion. This contraſt will probably appear ſtill much ſtronger, and by conſequence be the more inſtructive, when thoſe remarks and theſe we are going to make come to center in one ſingle point; to ſhew that the conduct of Queen Elizabeth, under great diſadvantages, produced all the good effects which prince or people could deſire; becauſe it was wiſely ſuited to the nature of our government; whereas the conduct of King James the firſt who had many and great advantages, which his predeceſſor wanted, made his reign grievous to the people, uneaſy to himſelf, and acceſſory to thoſe misfortunes, which befel his ſon; becauſe it was ill ſuited to the nature of our government, and founded on principles deſtructive of liberty.

* See the Craftſman, No. 137, 138, 139.

Few

Few princes (no, not even her cotemporary, Henry the fourth of France) have been ever raiſed to a throne under more diſadvantageous circumſtances, or have been ſurrounded in it with more complicated difficulties than Queen Elizabeth. Let us take a general ſurvey of them.

The diviſion and animoſity of parties had been carried to the height of religious rage. The cruelty of Queen Mary's reign, in which much proteſtant blood had been ſhed, and even that of her ſiſter with difficulty ſpared, rendered of courſe the perſecuting ſide more deſperate, and the other more exaſperated. It is hard to imagine that Queen Elizabeth had been able to cultivate many perſonal attachments to herſelf, before ſhe came to the crown, except that of Sir William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burleigh, and perhaps one or two more. Her impriſonment for a time, and the great conſtraint under which ſhe lived, during her ſiſter's whole reign, gave her little opportunity for it; and the jealous eye with which Gardiner, and other eccleſiaſtical zealots, obſerved her conduct, made it dangerous to attempt it.

In general, the Proteſtants deſired her ſucceſſion, and the Papiſts feared it. But the former were under oppreſſion, and even a kind of proſcription. The latter had the whole authority of the church and the ſtate in their hands, in this kingdom; and that of Ireland, bigotted to popery and prone to rebellion, was at their devotion. The proteſtants themſelves were divided, and thoſe who meant equally a reformation, fell into the utmoſt aſperity againſt each other, concerning the manner of making it, and the point to which it ought to be carried, on account of religion as well as of policy.

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In this divided ſtate, and in the ferment which ſuch diviſions muſt neceſſarily cauſe, Queen Elizabeth found the people whom ſhe came to govern. Surely, a more nice and perilous ſtate can hardly be imagined, eſpecially for her, who was led by inclination, and determined by particular circumſtances of intereſt, to eſtabliſh the reformation; that is, to declare for the weakeſt, though not the leaſt numerous party.

It is obſerved, (I think by Nathaniel Bacon, in his hiſtorical and political diſcourſes) that the methods taken by Henry the ſeventh to accumulate treaſure, made a rich King indeed, but did not inrich the crown. His ſon had ſeveral opportunities of doing both; inſtead of which he impoveriſhed himſelf, the crown, and the people, by all the methods which the moſt wanton profuſion could invent. He exhauſted the wealth of the nation. He did more. He debaſed the coin, by mingling it with copper, and loaded the public with debts. Theſe again were conſiderably increaſed in the reign of Edward the ſixth. Queen Mary was ſo far from diminiſhing them, that one of the principal complaints againſt her adminiſtration, next to the cruelty ſhe exerciſed, was the great diſſipation of the revenue, occaſioned by her reſtitutions to the church, and by her foundations of monaſtries. In this low incumbered ſtate, Queen Elizabeth found the revenues of the crown, and the wealth of the nation.

Her ſituation abroad was ſtill worſe than her ſituation at home. Calais, and the other Engliſh poſſeſſions in Picardy, had been loſt in a quarrel, where the intereſt of England had no concern. For the ſake of Spain we had war with France. The

war

war with Scotland ſtill continued; and Queen Elizabeth had no ally on whoſe aſſiſtance ſhe could depend.

Such diſtreſſed ſituations are rare, and when they have happened, they have been often rendered leſs difficult in reality, than in appearance, by ſome particular circumſtances which have attended them. But when Elizabeth began her reign, no ſuch circumſtances exiſted in her favour. On the contrary, almoſt every circumſtance aggravated her diſtreſs. The thrones of France and Spain were filled neither by old men, worn out with age and cares, nor by weak men, unequal to their rank and buſineſs, nor by children under the tuition of regents. Henry the ſecond reigned in France, Philip the ſecond in Spain; princes in the vigour of their age, of great ambition, of great talents, and ſeconded by the ableſt miniſters and generals in Europe. The French monarchy had been growing up from the time of Lewis the eleventh, towards that fulneſs of power and affluence of wealth, at which the Spaniſh monarchy was already arrived. Both of theſe princes were, by bigotry and policy, attached to the court of Rome; implacable enemies to the reformation, and ſuch, by conſequence, of Queen Elizabeth. Henry the ſecond had a farther reaſon for being ſo. He graſped, in his ambitious views, the crown of England, as well as that of Scotland; and looked on Queen Elizabeth as the uſurper of a right, belonging to his daughter-in-law. Philip, indeed, kept ſome faint and affected meaſures with Elizabeth, as long as he apprehended the union of ſo many crowns in the houſe of Valois; but this apprehenſion was ſoon at an end; and even his

ſhews

ſhews of friendſhip with it. Henry the ſecond, and his eldeſt ſon, Francis the ſecond, died in about two years. The deaths of theſe princes did, perhaps, diminiſh the difficulties and dangers to which Queen Elizabeth ſtood expoſed on one hand; but then they increaſed theſe difficulties and dangers on the other; ſince they took off all reſtraint from Philip in purſuit of his enterpriſes againſt her. His life laſted almoſt as long as hers, and his inveterate enmity as long as his life.

Another ſource from which difficulties and dangers were inceſſantly ariſing to Queen Elizabeth, lay in the objections which the papiſts made to her title on a principle of religion; and which were but too really, though indirectly, abetted by ſome proteſtants on a principle of faction. Whilſt diſputes about the ſucceſſion to the crown were confined to England, and turned on maxims of our own growth, if I may uſe that expreſſion, we have ſeen how little regard was paid to the titles, and to the pretended divine indefeaſable right of princes. But when foreign nations came to be intereſted in the ſucceſſion of our crown, they reaſoned, and they proceeded on other notions; not on thoſe which both cuſtom and law had eſtabliſhed here.

The attacks of this kind made on Queen Elizabeth, were the more grievous to her, becauſe they not only united the Roman catholic powers againſt her; but they made the diviſions wider, and more irreconcileable at home; where ſhe placed the chief ſtrength and ſecurity of her government.

Mary Queen of Scotland was a pretender, neither abjured in England, nor diſavowed and unſupported in other countries. Sovereign of one part of

of the iſland, ſhe had a powerful party in the other; wife of the Dauphin, and after that Queen of France, encouraged and aſſiſted by her uncles, who poſſeſſed more than regal power in that kingdom; by Spain, and by the whole Popiſh intereſt; ſhe was juſtly formidable to Queen Elizabeth as long as ſhe lived. Another circumſtance made her ſo ſtill more. The ſucceſs of the reformation ſeemed to increaſe the zeal of thoſe who continued in the communion of the church of Rome. The influence of the court of Rome became conſequently ſtronger at this point of time. It appeared both in France and in England too as powerful, though not as ſucceſsful, here at leaſt, as it had appeared in the eleventh century, in the days of the brave, but unfortunate Emperor, Henry the fourth, and of that inſolent friar, Gregory the ſeventh. Even this circumſtance may juſtly ſeem to have been inforced by another, by the eſtabliſhment of the order of Jeſuits. This order, the offſpring of a mad Spaniard, has had the principal honour, though other religious orders have endeavoured to ſhare it, of giving to the Pope an authority, like that which was exerciſed by the King of the Aſſaſſins, or the old man of the mountain, as he is called by ſome of the French hiſtorians; an authority which proved fatal to Henry the third and Henry the fourth of France; and which had like to have proved ſo to Queen Elizabeth, and even to her ſucceſſor.

Such were the difficulties and dangers which encompaſſed this Princeſs. The ſituation of England, in her time, reſembled that of a town powerfully beſieged without, and expoſed to treachery and ſedition within. That a town in ſuch circumſtances

ſhould defend itſelf, and even force the enemy, by its own ſtrength, to raiſe the ſiege, hardly falls within the bounds of probability. But that all this ſhould happen, and the inhabitants feel none of the inconveniencies of a long and obſtinate ſiege, nay, that they ſhould grow opulent during the continuance of it, and find themſelves at laſt better able to offend the enemy, than they were at firſt to defend their walls, ſeems an adventure of ſome extravagant romance. But it conveys a true image of this reign. Unallied and alone, Queen Elizabeth maintained a glorious and ſucceſsful war againſt the greateſt power and the richeſt potentate in Europe. She diſtreſſed him in the Weſt Indies. She inſulted him in Spain. She took from him the empire of the ſea. She fixed it in herſelf. She rendered all the projects of univerſal monarchy vain; and ſhook to the foundations the moſt exorbitant power, which ever diſturbed the peace, or threatened the liberties of Europe. She ſupported the oppreſſed people of the Netherlands, againſt the tyranny of their prince. She ſupported the Proteſtant ſubjects of France againſt Catherine of Medicis and her ſons, thoſe execrable butchers of their people. She ſupported the Kings of France, Henry the third and fourth, againſt the ambition of the princes of the houſe of Loraine, and the rebellious league of their popiſh ſubjects. She, who ſeemed to have every thing to fear, in the beginning of her reign, became in the progreſs of it terrible to her enemies. The pretender to her crown loſt her own. The Engliſh, who appeared at firſt ſo favourable to the Queen of Scotland, became at laſt as deſirous to ſacrifice the life of that unfortunate princeſs to the ſecurity of

Queen

Queen Elizabeth. Whilſt war, confuſion, and the miſeries which attend them, raged in the dominions of thoſe, who bent their aim at the diſturbance of her government; ſhe preſerved her ſubjects in peace and in plenty. Whilſt the glory of the nation was carried high by achievements in war, the riches and ſtrength of it were raiſed by the arts of peace to ſuch a degree as former ages had never ſeen, and as we of this age feel in the conſequences. Well therefore might my Lord Bacon, ſpeaking of Queen Elizabeth, ſay, * "as for her government, I aſſure "myſelf I ſhall not exceed, if I do affirm, that "this part of the iſland never had forty-five years "of better times; and yet not through the calm-"neſs of the ſeaſon, but through the wiſdom of "her regiment."

Having made theſe remarks on the difficulties and on the ſucceſs which attended Queen Elizabeth, it is time to conſider the cauſe which produced the ſtupendous effects of her reign. Now this cauſe is, I think, very plain. She was wiſe enough to ſee clearly into the nature of that government, at the head of which ſhe was placed; and to know that "† the ſupreme head of ſuch a government owes "a ſupreme ſervice to the whole." She was wiſe enough to know, that, to be powerful, ſhe muſt either uſurp on her people, deceive them, or gain them. The two firſt, ſhe ſaw, were hard, dangerous, and diſhonourable. The laſt, ſhe ſaw, was eaſy, ſafe, and glorious. Her head and her heart concurred to determine her choice. She made herſelf very ſoon the moſt popular perſon in the king-

* Advancement of learning, lib. 1.

† See Nat. Bacon's hiſt. and pol. diſcourſe.

dom. In her reign, the ſenſe of the court, the ſenſe of the parliament, and the ſenſe of the people, were the ſame; and, whenever ſhe exerted her own ſtrength, ſhe exerted the whole ſtrength of the nation. Nothing ſhe aſked was ever refuſed by parliament; becauſe ſhe aſked nothing which would have been refuſed by the people. She threw herſelf ſo entirely on the affections of her ſubjects, that ſhe ſeemed to decline all other tenure of the crown. At leaſt, ſhe was not very ſolicitous about clearing her title to it by deſcent. An act, declaring her right, according to the order of ſucceſſion ſettled in parliament 35th Henry the eighth, contented her; and ſhe neglected the precaution which her ſiſter had taken, in getting the act which excluded them both from the crown repealed, as far as it related to herſelf. The particular reaſons of her conduct, in this caſe, might perhaps be gueſſed at with more probability than they have been; but certainly one general reaſon outweighed them all in the mind of this heroical princeſs. She knew that however the ſubtlety of lawyers and political caſuiſts might influence opinions, nothing but her own conduct could give her the hearts of her people. Theſe ſhe deemed her great ſecurity. Theſe ſhe acquired, and the little gloſſes which might have been put on her title ſhe deſpiſed. The being not only tied, but knit to her people was her aim; and ſhe purſued this great point of view on all occaſions, the leaſt as well as the greateſt; and even on thoſe, where ſhe thought it neceſſary to refuſe or to reprimand. Nature, as well as art, fitted her for this conduct. She had dignity without pride. She was affable, without ſinking into low familiarity; and when ſhe

courted

courted her people ſhe courted them like a Queen. This popularity was ſometimes carried ſo far, both in her manners and in her expreſſions, that her enemies have endeavoured to make it paſs for groſs and fulſome affectation; and for ſuch, indeed, it ought to have paſſed if it had gone alone. It might have ſhocked, inſtead of alluring, if it had not been ſeconded by every action of her life, and contradicted by none. Let us now conſider, therefore, in ſome inſtances, what the conduct was which convinced her people ſo entirely of her goodneſs and her wiſdom, and which procured her ſuch large returns of gratitude, of duty, of affection, and zeal.

LETTER XIV.

A Firſt and eſſential condition, towards obtaining the love and confidence of a free people, is to be neither feared nor deſpiſed by them. Queen Elizabeth was, at no time, in any danger of the latter; and ſhe ſoon put herſelf above all the ſuſpicions which might have expoſed her to the former. The only difference between her and her parliament, which carried any paſſion or unkindneſs with it, happened in the ninth year of her reign. It was founded on the apprehenſions of the dangers which would ariſe after her death, if the ſucceſſion was not fixed during her life. But we do not find the leaſt inſinuation of any jealouſy of her government; though the heat of both houſes, at that moment, was too great to have concealed any uneaſineſs which had lain at their hearts. That ſhe was fond enough of her prerogative is certain; but then ſhe took care that it ſhould never be grievous; or that, if it was ſo, on ſome occaſions, to particular perſons, it ſhould appear by the occaſions themſelves, and by the manner of exerciſing it, ſpecious to the public. The prerogative certainly run high in thoſe days. Her grandfather had raiſed it by cunning, and her father by violence. The power of the privy-council in civil affairs, and the cenſorian power of the ſtar-chamber in criminal affairs, as my Lord Bacon very properly ſtiles it, took too much of the pleas of the crown, and of the common pleas, out of

of their proper channels, and * ſerved rather to ſcare men from doing wrong, than to do any man right. But the exerciſe of theſe powers having continued in four preceding reigns, the people were accuſtomed to it; and care being taken to give no flagrant occaſion of clamour againſt it, we are not to wonder if it was borne without oppoſition or murmur, in a reign as popular as this.

The high commiſſion-court, that we may quote another inſtance, had no doubt very extraordinary powers. The biſhops, who held the principal ſway in it, exerciſed by theſe means two very great authorities at the ſame time; one, as ordinaries in their dioceſes; the other, as judges in this court; ſo that they might fine and impriſon, as well as excommunicate and deprive. Now, it is not very probable, that the parliament, who thought the firſt of theſe powers too much, (as may be ſeen by the attempts made againſt it in the twenty-eighth year of this reign,) were very well pleaſed to ſee the ſecond in the ſame hands. However, the ſteadineſs of the Queen, in maintaining this part of the prerogative, which had been given her, was the leſs unpopular, on account of the unſettled ſtate of religion at this time; of the great moderation of the biſhops in theſe early days of the reformation; and of the prudent manner in which the juriſdiction of the high-commiſſion court was executed.

The effects of a bare-faced prerogative are not the moſt dangerous to liberty, for this reaſon; be-

* Bacon's hiſt. and pol. diſc.

cauſe

cauſe the alarm they give is commonly greater than the progreſs they make; and whilſt a particular man or two are cruſhed by them, a whole nation is put on its guard. The moſt dangerous attacks on liberty, are thoſe which ſurpriſe, or undermine; which are owing to powers given under pretence of ſome urgent neceſſity; to powers popular and reaſonable, perhaps, at firſt, but ſuch as ought not to become ſettled and confirmed by long exerciſe, and yet are rendered perpetual by art and management; and, in a great degree, by the nature of thoſe powers themſelves. Examples of this kind might be produced from the Spaniſh and other hiſtories. But Queen Elizabeth was far from ſetting any ſuch examples. She ſhewed her moderation in deſiring no ſuſpicious powers, as well as in the exerciſe of her prerogative; and this moderation was the more remarkable, becauſe no prince ever had the pretence of neceſſity to urge on ſtronger appearances. Her whole reign may be almoſt called a ſtate of defenſive and offenſive war; in England, as well as in Ireland; in the Indies, as well as in Europe. She ventured to go through this ſtate, if it was a venture, without the help of a ſtanding army. The people of England had ſeen none, from the days of Richard the ſecond, and this cautious Queen might perhaps imagine, that the example of his reign, and thoſe of other countries, where ſtanding armies were eſtabliſhed, would beget jealouſies in the minds of her people, and diminiſh that affection which ſhe eſteemed, and found to be the greateſt ſecurity of her perſon, and the greateſt ſtrength of her government. Whenever ſhe wanted troops, her ſubjects flocked to her ſtandard; and her reign affords

fords moſt illuſtrious proofs, that all the ends of ſecurity, and of glory too, may be anſwered in this iſland, without the charge and danger of the expedient juſt mentioned.

This aſſertion will not be contradicted by thoſe who recollect in how many places, and on how many occaſions, her forces fought and conquered the beſt diſciplined veteran troops in Europe. Other examples might be brought to ſhew how careful Queen Elizabeth was to avoid every thing which might give the leaſt umbrage to her people. But we have ſaid enough on this head. Let us proceed to another.

The conduct ſhe held, with reſpect to parties, deſerves to be remarked; becauſe the moderation, the wiſdom, and the equity, which ſhe ſhewed in it, contributed very much to cool the ferment in the beginning of her reign; by which ſhe had time to captivate the good will of her people; to ſettle her government; to eſtabliſh her authority; and even to change the national religion, with little contradiction, and without any diſturbance.

Notwithſtanding all the indignities ſhe had ſuffered, and all the dangers ſhe had run, before her acceſſion, ſeveral perſons were reſtored, and not a man was attainted in her firſt parliament. The ſteps I have mentioned being once made, ſhe ſtood on firmer ground, and had leſs to fear from the ſpirit of faction. This clemency, once ſhewn, ſhe could, more ſafely and with greater reaſon, exerciſe ſeverity, when the preſervation of the public peace made it neceſſary.

The peace of the kingdom was the ſtandard, to which ſhe proportioned her conduct. She was far from

from caſting herſelf with precipitation and violence even into that party, which ſhe favoured; and on which alone ſhe reſolved to depend. She was far from inflaming their ſpirits againſt the adverſe party; and farther ſtill from puſhing any ſort of men, Puritans, or even Papiſts, into deſpair; or provoking them to deſerve puniſhment, that ſhe might have a pretence to inflict it. She purſued her own ſcheme ſteadily; but ſhe purſued it gradually; and accompanied it with all the artful circumſtances, which could ſoften the minds of men, and induce thoſe, who were the moſt averſe to her meaſures, to bear them, at leaſt, patiently. On theſe principles ſhe proceeded in the whole courſe of her reign.

To the Papiſts ſhe uſed great lenity; till the bull of Pius Quintus, and the rebellion, and other attempts conſequent upon it, obliged her to procure new laws, and execute more rigour. Yet even then ſhe diſtinguiſhed * *Papiſts in conſcience, from Papiſts in faction.* She made the ſame diſtinction with regard to the Puritans. Their zeal was not condemned; only their violence was ſometimes cenſured; till they attempted to ſet up their own diſcipline, in oppoſition to that which had been eſtabliſhed by national authority, till their motives appeared to be *no more zeal, no more conſcience*, ſays ſecretary Walſingham, *but mere faction and diviſion.*

Thus cautious and ſteady was the conduct of Queen Elizabeth towards parties; ſteady to the principle, and therefore varied in the application, as the behaviour of parties towards her government varied; not as ſucceſs abroad, or the change of

* Walſingham's letter.

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ſervants at home, might have influenced that of a prince of inferior abilities. What has been ſaid relates to parties in the nation; for as to parties at court, the conduct of this Queen, though directed to the ſame general end, ſeems to have been different. In the nation ſhe choſe one party. She rendered the ſyſtem of that party the ſyſtem of the whole. By this eſtabliſhment, the other parties became ſo many factions; and by the conduct we have deſcribed, ſhe defeated and diſarmed theſe factions. At court ſhe countenanced, and perhaps fomented the parties, which different characters, and different intereſts created. But however that was, ſhe found means to attach them all to herſelf; and ſhe found this benefit by keeping her ear open to them all, that the truth could not be concealed from her by the moſt powerful of her miniſters; as we have explained in a former letter, upon this ſubject. On her acceſſion to the throne, ſhe retained thirteen of her ſiſter's counſellor's, and balanced them by no more than eight of her own religion. "On thoſe as well as on all others, which ſhe afterwards admitted into the miniſtry, ſays Camden, ſhe beſtowed her favours with ſo much caution, and ſo little diſtinction, as to prevent either party from gaining the aſcendant over her; whereby ſhe remained miſtreſs of herſelf, and preſerved both their affections and her own power and authority intire."

The favours by which ſhe diſtinguiſhed the Earls of Leiceſter and Eſſex, are not exceptions, in the courſe of ſo long a reign, ſufficient to deſtroy the truth of this general obſervation. Beſides, both theſe Lords felt the weight of her diſpleaſure, (nay one

one of them the rigour of her juſtice), when they preſumed too much on her favour, and ſwerved from their duty. The ſingular confidence which ſhe placed in Cecil and ſome others of her miniſters, cannot be quoted in oppoſition to it; for if ſhe diſtinguiſhed them, it was rather by the labours, than the favours ſhe heaped on them. She ſupported them indeed againſt their enemies; but then the merit of theſe men was far from being problematical. Their works teſtified daily for them, in bold and well-concerted enterpriſes; in wiſe, and well-conducted negotiations. The people reaped the benefit of their ſervices as well as the prince. They were juſtified in the nation, as well as ſupported at court. In ſhort, by this diſcernment of ſpirits, by this ſkilful management of parties, without the help of military force, unleſs in actual rebellions, Queen Elizabeth preſerved her people in tranquillity; though there paſſed not an hour in her whole reign, without ſome intrigue againſt her life, and the public peace.

This moderation in aſſuming and exerciſing power, might have been illuſtrated more, and evinced againſt all the little cavils made, and to be made, if we had not avoided too great prolixity. But it is time to haſten to the conſideration of ſome other parts of her conduct.

Queen Elizabeth was accuſed of avarice by her enemies; and perhaps ſhe was ſo by ſome of her friends. Among that hungry crew, which attends all courts for the loaves and the fiſhes, ſhe could not eſcape this charge. But ſurely the nation had reaſon to applaud her frugality. Her grandfather hoarded up riches. Her father diſſipated them.

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The conſequence under both theſe princes was, that very ſlight occaſion became a ſufficient pretence to aſk for ſubſidies; nay, they were aſked and granted too, when even the ſlighteſt occaſion did not exiſt. They were aſked by Henry the ſeventh for wars, which he never intended to make; and by Henry the eighth for reſiſting invaſions, which were never deſigned againſt him. Thus was the nation equally oppreſſed by the avarice of one, and by the profuſion of the other.

But Queen Elizabeth neither hoarded up, nor laviſhed away; and it is juſtly to be queſtioned whether any example of a prudent œconomy in private life can be produced equal to that, which ſhe practiſed in the whole management of her affairs. The famous Burleigh uſed to ſay, that "he never cared to ſee the treaſury ſwell like a diſordered ſpleen, when the other parts of the commonwealth were in a conſumption; and his miſtreſs thought that money in the pockets of her ſubjects was better placed than in her own exchequer." Surely, theſe maxims were wiſe, as well as popular. If a prince amaſſes wealth, to hoard it up like Henry the ſeventh, it is uſeleſs to himſelf, and loſt to the public. If he ſquanders it away, like Henry the eighth, he will enrich particular men, and impoveriſh the ſtate.

But whilſt theſe treaſures remain in the purſe of the ſubject, they circulate in commerce; they increaſe the common ſtock; and they increaſe by conſequence the riches of a prince; like Queen Elizabeth; for to ſuch a prince this purſe will be always open.

As immenſe as the expences were, which ſhe found herſelf obliged to make from the moment ſhe aſcend-

ed the throne, ſhe received nothing in taxes from her people till the ſixth year of her reign. The taxes, then given, were given by way of retribution; which was generally the method in her time. In former reigns, the people granted aids, not without a general communication at leaſt of the uſes, to which they were to be applied; but often without a ſufficient aſſurance that they ſhould be ſo applied. In this reign that method of proceeding was inverted.

The prince in the world, who deſerved to be truſted the moſt, deſired to be ſo the leaſt. The aids, which ſhe had from her people, were not ſo properly grants, as reimburſements of money, advanced for national ſervices. And what ſervices? For eſtabliſhing the Proteſtant religion; for defending England; for reſcuing Scotland; for carrying on a ſucceſsful war againſt an opulent and potent enemy; for aſſiſting the ſubjects, and even the kings of France; for ſupporting the people of the Netherlands; for refining the debaſed coin; for paying all the debts, and reſtoring the credit of the crown; for providing ammunition at home, which before this time we had been always obliged to purchaſe abroad; for improving both home and foreign trade; for rebuilding and augmenting the navy; and for doing all this, without any burthenſome impoſition on the people; as the parliament more than once acknowledged.

It was ſo much the maxim of Queen Elizabeth, to ſave for the public not for herſelf; and to meaſure her riches, by the riches of the nation, not by the treaſures ſhe had in her coffers; that ſhe refuſed ſupplies offered, and remitted payments of ſupplies granted, when ſhe found that ſhe was able to

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carry on the public ſervice without them. The two great principles of that œconomy, which enabled her to do ſo much for her people, and to oppreſs them ſo little, ſeem to have been theſe. Firſt, ſhe made the moſt of her revenues; not by tormenting and racking her ſubjects, like Henry the ſeventh, but by keeping a ſtrict hand over her officers, and hindering them from enriching themſelves, either by direct fraud, or by a clandeſtine management, which may be juſtly termed indirect fraud, and is often more pernicious than the other. Secondly, ſhe practiſed that ſuperior œconomy, of which we have ſpoken in a former paper, with the utmoſt ability. What could be done by wiſdom, or courage, ſhe never attempted by money; nor expected that her ſubjects ſhould buy her out of difficulties. Strong at home, ſhe affected little to lean on foreign help. As her alliance was often courted, and ſhe ſeldom courted that of others, it was in her power, and ſhe took the advantage, to engage in no expence, but ſuch as the intereſt of her kingdom rendered immediately neceſſary. To this intereſt alone ſhe proportioned her expence. This was the ſole rule of her conduct. The Huguenots, whom ſhe aſſiſted in the firſt war, made their peace without her, and aſſiſted to retake from her the places ſhe had bargained for with them; yet ſhe helped them, in the wars which followed, with her troops, her ſhips and her money. The Dutch had given her no cauſe to complain of their behaviour. Yet when France abandoned them at the treaty of Vervins, and they had no ſupport but hers remaining, ſhe made a new bargain with them, and leſſened her own charge; becauſe ſhe knew they were able, at that time, to ſupply the deficiency.

In all these expences, she was careful neither to starve nor overfeed the cause, whilst it lasted; and she frequently stipulated a repayment; which she might exact afterwards, if she found reason so to do; or which she might remit, and thereby create a second obligation to her, if she found her account in such an instance of generosity. Queen Elizabeth was not only thus frugal for her people, but perpetually attentive to the methods of enriching them. In the very first parliament, which she held, amidst the most important affairs; such as the settlement of the crown on her own head; the change of religion; and the establishment of the church; regulations for the improvement of trade, and increase of shipping were not forgot.

We might pursue the same observation through the whole course of her reign, both in parliament and out of it; and shew, in numberless instances, how she rose to the highest, and descended even to the lowest circumstances, which in any degree affected the trade and navigation of her subjects. We might shew the advantages she took, in these respects, not only of the faults committed by other governments, but of the misfortunes of other countries. In a word, we might shew how war itself, one of the greatest public calamities, instead of impoverishing, became a source of riches to this nation, by the manner in which she made it.

But these particulars would carry us beyond the bounds we have prescribed to ourselves. In general, it will not be denied, that, beside the spirit of industry, which exercised itself at home, Queen Elizabeth raised and pushed to the highest degree, by the protection and encouragement she gave, a spirit

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of diſcovering new countries; making new ſettlements; and opening new veins of trade. The force of this firſt impreſſion has laſted long among us. Commerce has thrived under neglects, and diſcouragement. It has ſubſiſted under oppreſſions and obſtructions, and the ſpirit of it is not yet extinguiſhed by that of ſtock-jobbing; though the ſpirit of ſtock-jobbing be to that of trade, what the ſpirit of faction is to that of liberty. The tendency of both is to advance the intereſt of a few worthleſs individuals, at the expence of the whole community. The conſequence of both, if ever they prevail to the ruin of trade and liberty, muſt be, that the harpies will ſtarve in the midſt of imaginary wealth; and that the children of faction, like the iron race of Cadmus, will deſtroy one another.

Before Queen Elizabeth's reign, the commerce of England was confined and poor. In her reign it extended itſelf over all the known, and even into the unknown parts of the world. We traded to the north, and opened our paſſage into Muſcovy. We carried our merchandiſe up the Duina, down the Volga, and acroſs the Caſpian ſea into Perſia.

Our merchants viſited the coaſts of Africa; all the countries of the Grand Signior; and, following the tracts of the Venetians into the Eaſt Indies, they ſoon followed the Portugueſe thither by the Cape of Good Hope. They went thither through the South ſea, and ſailed round the world. In the Weſt Indies, they not only traded, but eſtabliſhed themſelves, in ſpite of all the power of Spain.

Before Queen Elizabeth's reign, the fleet of England was ſo inconſiderable, that even in the days of her father, if I miſtake not, we were forced to bor-

row, or hire ſhips of Hamburgh, Lubeck, Dantzick, and other places.

In her reign, it ſoon grew to ſuch a number and ſtrength, that it became terrible to the greateſt maritime powers of Europe.

On ſuch foundations were the riches and power of this kingdom laid by Queen Elizabeth; and theſe were ſome of the means ſhe employed to gain the affections of her ſubjects. Can we be ſurpriſed if ſhe ſucceeded?

LETTER

LETTER XV.

QUEEN ELIZABETH ſucceeded in gaining the affections of her ſubjects, not only by the conduct which ſhe held at home, but by that which ſhe held in the management of the national intereſt abroad.

We have endeavoured to explain ſome particulars of the former. It remains that we give the leaſt imperfect ideas we are able of the latter, and that we apply the whole great example of this reign, to confirm the doctrines we have advanced.

Queen Elizabeth could not have eſtabliſhed and preſerved, as ſhe did, the tranquillity of her people in the midſt of diſturbance, nor their ſecurity in the midſt of danger, if ſhe had not taken ſome ſhare in the general affairs of Europe. She took therefore ſuch a ſhare as the intereſt of England neceſſarily required at that time; and ſhe conducted herſelf in the management of it with wiſdom and addreſs ſuperior to any of her predeceſſors.

Her ſiſter had been rendered by bigotry an egregious bubble to the court of Rome. Perſuaded by her huſband, and deceived by her miniſters, ſhe was ſo likewiſe very fatally in the quarrel, which broke out between France and Spain. The parliament, in aſſenting to her marriage with a foreign prince, had impoſed ſuch conditions, as were judged ſufficient to preſerve the conſtitution of the government, and the independency of the kingdom.

Philip

Philip had ſworn to the obſervation of theſe conditions. Such of them, as he had not either time, or opportunity, or temptation to break, were obſerved; but the others proved too weak to hold him. Thus, for inſtance, we do not find that he enriched himſelf at the expence of England. He is ſaid, on the contrary, to have brought hither very great treaſures; and his father had truſted the diſtribution of an immenſe ſum to Gardiner; ſo that if he bribed the nation, it was with his own money, not theirs; but he engaged the nation in a war with France, becauſe France broke with Spain; notwithſtanding the expreſs condition made by parliament*, "that the match ſhould not at all derogate from the league lately concluded betwixt the Queen of England and the King of France, but the peace ſhould remain inviolate between the Engliſh and the French."

This ſacrifice of the national to a foreign intereſt coſt us Calais; a conqueſt, which the French looked upon as a compenſation for near two hundred other places, which they were obliged by the treaty of Cambray to give up to Philip. Boulogne had been ſacrificed in the preceding reign, not to a foreign intereſt, but to that of the miniſter, Dudley Earl of Warwick, afterwards Duke of Northumberland. The people were willing and able to aſſert their right, and to defend their poſſeſſion; but the ſituation of the miniſter, and the ſchemes of private intereſt, which he was carrying on at home, required that he ſhould avoid, at any rate, a war, even a defenſive war. In ſhort Boulogne, for which

* CAMBDEN.

France

France had engaged to give two millions, was delivered up for four hundred thouſand crowns; and the very ſame miniſter, who had oppoſed with violence all the public conſiderations, urged by the protector for yielding this place, yielded it to purchaſe a treaty neceſſary for himſelf, detrimental and diſhonourable to the nation.

We have ſaid enough in a former letter, concerning the wild conduct of Henry the eighth in foreign affairs; and there is no need of going any farther back. Theſe examples are ſufficient to ſhew the oppoſition between that of Queen Elizabeth and that of her predeceſſors. She was neither deceived, like them, by her miniſters; nor betrayed by her paſſions, to ſerve any other intereſt at the expence of England.

It would be eaſy to prove, from many inſtances, how careful ſhe was to avoid every thing, which might even warp the ſteady tenour of her conduct in this reſpect. As long as ſhe had no real intereſt diſtinct from that of the country ſhe governed, ſhe knew no fictitious intereſt could be impoſed on her. She kept herſelf therefore clear of any ſuch real intereſt, and thought that the crown of England deſerved her ſole, her undivided care.

Much has been ſaid of her behaviour in all the treaties of marriage propoſed to her. We ſhall not engage in that diſquiſition. But this, we think, cannot be controverted; that, if ever ſhe was in earneſt reſolved to marry, ſhe was ſo when the articles of marriage between her and the Duke of Anjou were ſigned. It is hardly poſſible, as Rapin obſerves, to account for her conduct on this occaſion by any other principle. Now, upon this ſuppoſition,

on, what motive could determine her to break this match in ſo abrupt a manner? The reaſons urged by Camden, and other writers in general, prove too much. They ſerve rather to prove that ſhe ſhould not have entered into theſe engagements at all, than to account for her breaking them as ſhe did. But, among the reaſons on which Walſingham inſiſted when he was ſent into France on this occaſion, we may obſerve one in particular, founded on a fact, which happened after the ſigning of the articles; and which accounts for the Queen's conduct in this caſe agreeably to principles, on which ſhe proceeded in all others. The Duke of Anjou had accepted the ſovereignty of the Low Countries. By this ſtep, he had engaged himſelf in a war with Spain; and the Queen would not, on his account, engage her people in it, * "deſiring nothing more "than that by this marriage the realm might be "preſerved in peace and tranquillity."

She might incline to marry this Prince, under all the limitations and reſerves contained in the articles, whilſt he had no dominions on the continent; and yet ſtart backwards, and reſolve to break the match, as ſoon as ſhe ſaw him actually poſſeſſed of the ſovereignty of the Low Countries.

Nay, if we ſhould ſuppoſe, againſt hiſtorical probability, that ſhe never deſigned to conſummate her marriage, though ſhe entered into articles, yet there will ſtill remain no reaſonable way of accounting for the ſudden reſolution ſhe took of breaking at this preciſe point of time; unleſs we ſuppoſe, that ſhe thought this reaſon the ſtrongeſt and the moſt

* CAMDEN.

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unanſwerable, of all thoſe which could be urged in excuſe of a meaſure liable to ſeveral objections, and ſome very inconvenient contingencies.

There were few things which ſhe had more at heart, than reſcuing the Netherlands from the Spaniſh yoke; and there was nothing in the whole extent of foreign affairs, to which ſhe gave greater attention. Even, at this time, ſhe ſupplied the Duke of Anjou with very conſiderable ſums, for the ſupport of his enterprize; and, about four years afterwards, ſhe eſpouſed more openly the cauſe of theſe provinces, by making a treaty with the ſtates, and by ſending an army to their aſſiſtance. But as ſhe would not marry a prince, who was their ſovereign, ſo ſhe would not accept this ſovereignty when it was offered directly to her. She perſiſted in avoiding an engagement which might, in its conſequence, carry her farther than the intereſt of England required; or oblige her to make greater efforts than were conſiſtent with that eaſy and flouriſhing ſtate, in which ſhe reſolved to preſerve her own people.

Much more might be ſaid, but this may ſuffice to ſhew, what the firſt and fundamental principle was, by which Queen Elizabeth governed herſelf in all foreign affairs. She conſidered the intereſt of no kingdom, no ſtate nor people, no, not even the general intereſt of the Reformation, as zealous a Proteſtant as ſhe was, nor the preſervation of a balance of power in Europe, as great an heroine as ſhe was, in any other light than relatively to the intereſt of England. She aſſiſted or oppoſed, ſhe defended or attacked, juſt as this intereſt directed; and the degree to which it was concerned, was the exact and conſtant

conſtant meaſure to which ſhe proportioned her good and her ill offices, her friendſhip, and her enmity. She was diverted from this principle of conduct, neither by weakneſs nor ſtrength of mind; neither by fear nor hope; neither by puſillanimity, nor courage; neither by moderation nor ambition.

We may conclude this head, by venturing to affirm, that, in the whole courſe of her reign, there was not a penny of Engliſh money ſpent, nor a drop of Engliſh blood ſpilt; except where it was neceſſary to keep off from this nation ſome real, viſible danger; or to procure to it ſome real, viſible advantage.

Queen Elizabeth's policy was deep, and the means ſhe employed were often very ſecret; but the ends to which this policy and theſe means were directed, were never equivocal. Let us now deſcend into ſome particular inſtances of the wiſdom and addreſs with which ſhe purſued this great principle.

Theſe particulars may be reduced properly, we think, under two general heads. The firſt is this: "She watched the ebbs and flows of the power and "intereſt of Europe; the viciſſitudes and fluctua-"tions in the affairs of peace and war." We uſe the words of a * late writer, but ſhall make a very different application of them.

This uncertain, varied, ſhifting ſcene, was ſo far from being the cauſe of bad meaſures, or the excuſe for bad ſucceſs, at the time we are ſpeaking of, that it was the very ſource from whence Queen Elizabeth derived thoſe opportunities which ſhe improved ſo

* See Obſervations on the Writings of the Craftſman.

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gloriouſly. A weaker council than hers might have been puzzled, and weaker heads might have been turned by ſo confuſed a ſtate of affairs. Unable to ſteer ſteadily through ſo many difficulties, every current would have carried ſuch men along with it. Every blaſt of wind would have driven them before it. Perpetually toſſed about, at the mercy of every event, they muſt have lived from day to day, or from hour to hour.

If the kingdom had eſcaped entire deſtruction in this forlorn condition, it muſt have been by miracle, and without any merit on the part of thoſe who governed; but this intire deſtruction would much more probably have followed, after a long ſeries of calamities, without any other excuſe on their part, than that of charging the cataſtrophe to the account of fortune, the common ſcape-goat of unſkilful miniſters.

The conduct and the ſucceſs of Queen Elizabeth and her miniſters were very different. She managed France, until ſhe had taken ſuch meaſures as left her leſs to fear from Scotland; and ſhe managed Spain, until ſhe had nothing left to fear from France.

She knew what deſigns Henry the ſecond built on the pretenſions of his daughter-in law, Mary Queen of Scotland; and no one who conſiders the hiſtory of this time, nay, even as he finds it deduced by Rapin himſelf, will be of his mind, that ſhe expected to "enjoy great tranquillity by the peace," which ſhe made, ſoon after her acceſſion to the throne, with France and Scotland.

But the making this treaty gave her time, which was of the utmoſt importance to her to gain, abroad

as well as at home, in the beginning of her reign. The manner in which ſhe made it, gave her reputation likewiſe; and ſhe was wiſe enough to know of what real advantage reputation is, and how much that of a prince depends on the firſt ſteps he makes in government.

She practiſed, in this negotiation, a rule which ſhe obſerved to the laſt. How much ſoever Philip reſented her proceedings at home, it was plain he could not abandon, at that time, her intereſts abroad. The point of honour, drawn from the conſideration that England had entered into the war for the ſake of Spain, did not probably weigh much with him; but the pretenſions of France gave him a juſt alarm; and the ſame reaſons which are ſaid to have induced him to ſave her life, when ſhe was princeſs, ſtood in force to make him ſupport her, now ſhe was Queen, againſt the power of France. Notwithſtanding this plauſible conſideration, Queen Elizabeth reſolved to treat for herſelf, and by herſelf. "She was of opinion, ſays Camden, that it would "not redound to the honour of England, or her-"ſelf, to be reduced to the neceſſity of ſupporting "her intereſts, by a dependence on Spain." She exerted the ſame ſpirit, and behaved herſelf with the ſame dignity, on a very remarkable occaſion, and in a very nice conjuncture, at the latter end of her reign, at the treaty of Vervins.

She deſpiſed the offers made her by Henry the fourth. She reſolved to continue the war, and to ſupport alone the ſtates of the Low Countries, rather than to ſuffer the man in the world, who had the greateſt obligations to her, to treat for her. True it is, that ſhe had reaſon to be diſſatisfied with his

his behaviour; but, beſides that, the good underſtanding between this Prince and Philip the ſecond, being promoted by the court of Rome, it is poſſible Queen Elizabeth might think, ſuch negotiators as were devoted to that court, not quite ſo proper to be truſted with the intereſts of her kingdom.

As ſoon as Henry the ſecond was dead, and his ſon Francis the ſecond, a young and in every ſenſe a weak prince, was on the throne of France, ſhe acted with leſs reſerve and caution. The treaty, which had been privately negotiated before with the malecontents of Scotland, was now ſigned; her army marched to their aſſiſtance; the French were driven out of that kingdom; the reformation was ſolemnly and legally eſtabliſhed there; and Queen Elizabeth was the avowed defender of the liberties privileges, and religion of the Scotiſh nation. Francis the ſecond lived a very ſhort time, and died without leaving any children. The fear therefore of an union of the crowns of England and Scotland, with that of France, terrified Philip the ſecond no longer. Queen Elizabeth had therefore the more to fear. The court of France had ſtill the ſame bigotry, and the ſame hatred to her; though not the ſame pretenſions. The court of Spain could be now no more reſtrained by any political conſideration, from purſuing thoſe deſigns againſt her, even in conjunction with France, which no other conſideration had hitherto retarded.

The projects formed, and the engagements taken between theſe powers, at the congreſs at Bayonne, were not abſolute ſecrets. She felt the effects of them every day, in conſpiracies againſt her govern-

ment, and even her life. Too weak to defend herſelf by force on ſo many ſides, ſhe defended herſelf by ſtratagem; improved every incident; and took ſome advantage of every turn. She contented herſelf to countermine the intrigues of the courts of Rome, of France, and of Spain. With the firſt ſhe kept no meaſures, becauſe ſhe could have no war. With the two laſt ſhe kept all meaſures poſſible to prevent one. Though Queen Elizabeth's whole reign was properly a ſtate of war, and there was no point of time in it where ſhe was free from all attacks, private as well as public, indirect as well as direct; yet the firſt twenty-five years of her reign may be ſaid, in one ſenſe, to have been neither a ſtate of war nor a ſtate of peace, becauſe both ſides pretended to look on the treaties of peace as ſubſiſting; and either diſavowed, or excuſed, the hoſtilities reciprocally committed; not conſtantly, but occaſionally committed. If ſhe had fallen into this ſtate from that of a ſettled peace, diſentangled from all pretenſions, either of her own upon others, or of others upon her, there would be no occaſion to admire her conduct. But that ſhe ſhould be able, when ſhe neither had, nor could have a ſettled, ſecure peace with her neighbours, to ſtand ſo long on the ſlippery verge of war, and avoid the neceſſity of engaging directly in it, till ſhe was in a condition of doing ſo with ſucceſs, is juſtly matter of the greateſt admiration. If ſhe had only aimed to keep off the evil day, it might at laſt have come upon her with a double weight of misfortune. If ſhe had only gained time to prolong ſuſpenſe, ſhe might have loſt opportunities; waſted her ſtrength, tired, jaded, and exhauſted her people. But this was far from

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being the caſe. She was in this ſtate by good, not by bad policy; and ſhe made the uſe ſhe deſigned of it. She diſappointed, divided, and weakened her enemies. She prepared the opportunities which ſhe afterwards improved. She united, animated, and enriched her people; and (as difficult as that may ſeem to be for a prince in ſuch a ſituation) ſhe maintained her own dignity, and ſupported the honour of the nation. To exemplify all theſe particulars, would be to write her hiſtory; but it is neceſſary to ſay ſomething upon them.

Of the two powers abroad, from whom alone ſhe had any thing to apprehend, and with whom ſhe was principally concerned, France gave her the leaſt and the ſhorteſt trouble. Charles the ninth came a minor to the crown. Two factions, drunk with religious enthuſiaſm, and headed by men of the moſt deſperate ambition, deſolated the kingdom. The Queen-mother blew up the flames firſt, and tried in vain afterwards to extinguiſh them by a deluge of blood. Queen Elizabeth, who had probably encouraged the famous conſpiracy of Amboiſe, which broke out juſt before the death of Francis the ſecond, continued to abett and ſupport the Proteſtant party; but ſtill ſubordinately to ſuch meaſures, as her ſituation relatively to Scotland, or Ireland, or Spain, obliged her to keep with Charles the ninth. Theſe meaſures were ſometimes ſuch, and even after the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, as the zeal of the Huguenots could hardly forgive her. But ſhe went wiſely and ſteadily on to her own purpoſes.

Non ponebat enim rumores ante ſalutem.

When Henry the third came to the crown, and the league was once formed, the crown of France wanted her aſſiſtance, and had it; and as powerful as the princes of the houſe of Loraine were, they could give her little open diſturbance; unleſs they prevailed in their wicked, and almoſt chimerical projects in France. With theſe princes, and their faction, therefore, ſhe never kept any meaſures, as they never kept any with her. As politic a prince as Philip the ſecond is eſteemed to have been, he was amuſed by the regard which Queen Elizabeth affected ſometimes for his perſon, and always for the treaties ſubſiſting between them; and he loſt the opportunities of attacking her with advantage. The ſlow councils of Spain, and the ſlower execution of them, produced opportunities which her ſegacity and vigour improved. The ſupport ſhe gave to the Huguenots, made the Spaniards afraid of provoking her, by too haſty and direct attacks, to give the ſame ſupport to the people of the Low Countries. She turned their game againſt them, and acted in the Low Countries, in the ſame manner as they acted in Ireland, and even in England; but with better effect. From the year 1577, ſhe began to favour this revolt; and, in the year 1585, ſhe made a formal treaty with the States Such of theſe meaſures as could be concealed, ſhe concealed. Such of them as could not be concealed, ſhe excuſed, or endeavoured to juſtify and reconcile with the treaties between Spain and England.

As the time ſhe gained, and the diverſions ſhe gave, by this management, put it quite out of the power of France, and made Spain leſs able to hurt her; ſo they alone put it in her power to ſettle her

government, and to do all the great things at home, of which we have ſpoken in other papers *. We ſhall not repeat them here, but ſhall conclude this head by obſerving, in an example or two, how ſhe maintained her own dignity, in other caſes, beſides that of treating, which is above taken notice of, and how ſhe ſupported the honour of the nation, and the intereſt of her ſubjects.

During the time ſhe was the moſt careful to avoid a war with Spain, and had the moſt reaſon to be ſo, even in the year 1568, whilſt thoſe reſolutions, which broke out ſoon afterwards, were preparing, ſhe would not ſuffer the leaſt injury to be offered to any of her ſubjects with impunity. Some veſſels and effects, belonging to an Engliſh merchant, had been ſeized by the Spaniards in the Weſt Indies. She did not make war upon this, but ſhe ſoon found and ſeized an opportunity of reſenting the inſult. She laid her hands on very great ſums of money, claimed indeed by Genoeſe merchants, but ſent to the Low Countries, and deſigned, no doubt, for the Spaniſh ſervice there. The Duke of Alva, ſeized, in return, the perſons and effects of the ſubjects of England; and ſhe immediately made repriſals on thoſe of the Flemmings. What compoſition was made with the Genoeſe does not, I think, appear; but as the ſeizure was to the diſappointment and loſs of Spain, ſo the compoſition was probably to the advantage of England; ſince, at this very time, Queen Elizabeth diſcharged the debts contracted by her father and brother to foreigners. As to the effects of the Netherlands, ſhe

* See the firſt ſeven volumes of the Craftſman, printed for R. Franklin.

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returned the overplus of the value, after having repaid her own ſubjects the full amount of their loſſes. She carved for her people, and would not leave it to a diſpute, what reparation they ſhould have; much leſs, whether they ſhould have any reparation or not.

Such a conduct as this, which ſhe held, even whilſt ſhe kept meaſures with Spain, and avoided a war, foretold what might be expected from her, and what ſhe actually performed, when ſhe thought it no longer expedient to keep the ſame meaſures. But this will come, with other reflections, more properly under the next general head; to which we think that the particular inſtances of Queen Elizabeth's wiſdom and addreſs, in the management of foreign affairs, may be reduced.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

IF Queen Elizabeth conſidered every foreign intereſt relatively to the intereſt of England, ſhe conſidered likewiſe every meaſure to be taken in foreign affairs relatively to the ſituation of England. This we eſtabliſh as the ſecond general head, to which the particular inſtances of her wiſdom and addreſs, in the management of foreign affairs, may be properly reduced.

She conſidered herſelf as a Queen of a country cut off from the continent, and ſeparated by the ſea from all other countries, except Scotland. Her conduct therefore towards Scotland was very different, in many reſpects, from that, which ſhe held towards every other nation. A due obſervation of theſe different principles, on which Queen Elizabeth proceeded in the divided ſtate of our iſland, may ſerve to ſet, in a ſtronger and clearer light, that ſingle principle, which remains to be followed in our united ſtate.

The ſituation of an iſland affords great advantages, when they are wiſely improved; and when they are neglected, as great diſadvantages may reſult from this very ſituation. The reign, now before us, is a glorious and unanſwerable proof that the halcyon days, ſo much boaſted of, and ſo ſeldom found, days of proſperity, as well as peace, may be enjoyed in an iſland, whilſt all the neighbouring continent is filled with alarms, and even laid

laid waſte by war. But our own hiſtories will ſhew us likewiſe, how an iſland may approach, as it were, too near the continent, and be fatally drawn into that great vortex. Leſt we ſhould ramble too widely in the large field, which opens itſelf, let us confine our reflections to ſome of thoſe different means and objects, either of defence, or of offence, which nature, improved by art, preſents to people who inhabit iſlands, or to people who inhabit the continent, according to their different ſituations. A powerful navy is of indiſpenſible neceſſity to the former of theſe. Without it, they muſt be poor and expoſed. With it, they may be rich and ſecure. Barriers of fortified towns and great ſtanding armies are of the ſame neceſſity to the latter. Without this ſecurity, they lye open to every inroad, and at the mercy of every neighbour. With it, they may be ſafe from foreign danger, and even terrible to thoſe who live round them. But then as the ſea is a barrier of no expence, and as a maritime force carries no domeſtic danger along with it, but inriches the community it defends, ſo a fortified barrier, and a regular army, which are neceſſary to ſecure a nation ſituated on the continent againſt foreign danger, carry great domeſtic inconveniencies, and even dangers too along with them. Both of them like armour, too heavy to be born, waſte the ſtrength of thoſe, who are covered by them; and an army like a ſword, which recoils on the blow, may wound the conſtitution it was meant to defend. But farther; as particular families, by uniting together, formed larger ſocieties, for their common defence, and gave riſe to the kingdoms and ſtates, which have appeared in the world; ſo theſe

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larger ſocieties have, ever ſince, found it neceſſary, or advantageous, to unite together in various manners; ſometimes by an entire union, or an incorporation of different people into one body politic; ſometimes by a partial, or fœderal union of diſtinct ſtates in one common cauſe; and at all times by alliances, made on particular occaſions, and ſuggeſted by a real, or ſeeming conformity of intereſts. This occaſional union by alliances with other ſtates, of which alone we are to ſpeak in this place, is ſo neceſſary to all the nations on the continent, that even the moſt powerful cannot ſubſiſt without it; and thoſe, who manage it beſt, are accounted wiſeſt. Their ſeveral intereſts are the objects of their alliances; and as the former are ſubject to change, the latter muſt vary with them. Such variations, whether occaſioned by the courſe of accidents, or by the paſſions of men, though made by a few, will affect many; becauſe there always are, and always muſt be, ſyſtems of alliances ſubſiſting among theſe nations; and therefore, as a change in ſome of the parts of one ſyſtem neceſſarily requires a change in all the reſt; ſo the alteration of one ſyſtem neceſſarily requires an alteration of the others.

Thus are they always toſſed from peace to war, and from war to peace, Perpetual negotiation is the life and ſoul of their governments. Their well-being, nay their ſafety at home, requires that they ſhould be always buſy abroad. It is neceſſary for them to be mediators, arbitrators, or, which is infinitely worſe, guaranties; to be contracting parties in preliminary, proviſional, or explanatory treaties; in defenſive or offenſive alliances; by which means, they get over daily difficulties, by the multiplication of laſting incumbrances.

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The interfering and clashing of their rights and pretensions, and the various obligations, by which they stand bound to one another, appear to be, and are the immediate causes of all these disputes and contentions. But the principal and remote cause arises from the proximity and other circumstances of their situations. That necessity, or advantage, which gave occasion to the original engagements, has maintained and multiplied them since; and the last would not be reasonable if the first had not been necessary.

Here then arises an essential difference between those objects, which are proper to the policy of an island, and those which are so to the policy of the continent; a difference greatly to the advantage of the former; the circumstances of whose situation not requiring so constant and intimate an union with other states, either for defence or offence, render unnecessary a great part of the engagements, which prove such heavy and lasting incumbrances on the latter.

An island under one government, advantageously situated, rich in itself, richer by its commerce, can have no necessity, in the ordinary course of affairs, to take up the policy of the continent; to enter into the system of alliances we have been speaking of; or, in short, to act any other part than that of a friendly neighbour and a fair trader. If an extraordinary crisis happens on the continent, which may endanger the safety even of those who are separated from it, (such as we saw at the beginning of the present century) self-preservation will, no doubt, determine men, as it ought, to unite by stricter alliances with those powers, with whom they

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are occaſionally united by a more immediate intereſt; but, even in this caſe, neither will ſelf-preſervation require, nor good policy ſuffer, that ſuch a people ſhould enter deep into the quarrels, or involve themſelves intricately, much leſs continually, in the political ſchemes of the continent. We paſs over offenſive caſes, becauſe it is manifeſt that the people of an iſland can have no intereſt in making foreign acquiſitions; and that therefore it would be abſurd in them to ſpend their blood and treaſure in acquiring only for others; or to attack any farther than it is neceſſary to defend.

We confine ourſelves to the caſe of defence before mentioned; and upon that we ſay, a people on the continent may have reaſon to engage as deeply in defence of another country, as if they defended the walls of their own towns, or the doors of their own houſes; becauſe another country may be the ſole barrier of their own. But this can never be reaſonably done by the people of an iſland, who have another, and a better barrier than any the continent can form for them. Such a people are to look on their engagements with other countries, as on outworks caſt up in haſte, which may ſerve to defeat a weak attack, or to delay and diſappoint a ſtrong one. But it would be the height of folly in them, even in one of thoſe extraordinary conjunctures, which we now ſuppoſe, to lay the whole ſtreſs of their defence here; to ſpend their ſtrength improperly; and to forego thoſe advantages, which nature has given them.

The nations on the continent might teach them another leſſon. They are careful to employ every advantage of their ſituation; a river, a lake, a

ridge of mountains; and ſhall the inhabitants of an iſland neglect the ſea? ſhall they do by choice all, which other nations are obliged to do by neceſſity? Surely not; and if at any time ſuch a conduct can be proved neceſſary to certain purpoſes, we think it will reſult, from this proof, that ſuch purpoſes ſhould be laid aſide, not that ſuch meaſures ſhould be purſued.

Theſe reflections, with others of the ſame kind, preſent themſelves naturally to thoſe, who conſider the conduct of Queen Elizabeth, and the events of her reign. We may therefore conclude that they were, at leaſt, ſome of the principles of her government.

How ſhe formed, or rather how ſhe protected, and aided a party, already formed in Scotland, on principles of religion and liberty, has been obſerved; as well as the ſucceſs of this meaſure, by which the troops of France were driven out of that kingdom, and the influence of France on the government was either removed, or guarded againſt. To maintain and improve this advantage, was the great affair of her life. England was, with reſpect to Scotland, like a kingdom on the continent, and Queen Elizabeth employed, with reſpect to Scotland all the policy of the continent.

We find her buſy on that ſide in almoſt every page of her hiſtory; almoſt always negotiating, and always intriguing. A friend, an enemy, a mediatrix, an umpire, a guarantee, ſhe played every part which might keep others from hurting Scotland, and Scotland from hurting her. Her armies were at all times ready to march, and her fleets to ſail thither. As ſtrict an œconomy as ſhe practiſed

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every where elſe, ſhe was profuſe there; but her profuſion turned to account, and therefore deſerves another name. There may be ſuch ſchemes, ſuch management, and ſuch ſucceſs, as may render even the ſmalleſt expence profuſion; but thoſe of Queen Elizabeth were ſufficient to juſtify the greateſt. The ſecret ſervice of her reign was private in tranſaction and public in effect; not equally inſcrutable in both.

About the fourteenth year of her reign, ſhe had brought the affairs of Scotland to ſuch a paſs, that ſhe ſeemed to have nothing to fear from that quarter. The plots, in favour of Queen Mary, had been diſcovered; the inſurrections defeated; and the Duke of Norfolk executed in England. In Scotland the ſame party was broken. The Earl of Morton, a man abſolutely devoted to Queen Elizabeth, was regent, the caſtle of Edinburgh was taken; the civil war was finiſhed with compleat ſucceſs, and ſhe enjoyed great tranquillity; becauſe, according to Rapin's obſervation, ſhe could now be only attacked by ſea; that is, ſhe had now the whole advantage of an iſland.

This happy ſtate did not continue long without interruption. Morton loſt and reaſſumed his power, was diſgraced, proſecuted, and at laſt beheaded. King James had taken very young the government of his kingdom; and young, as well as old, was governed by his favourites. The party of his mother in Scotland did not indeed riſe again, ſo as to give Queen Elizabeth any umbrage. But his general character and his behaviour, on ſome particular occaſions, the character of his favourites, and the intrigues they were known to carry on, obliged her

to reaſſume, if ſhe had ever laid it aſide, and to purſue her ancient conduct towards Scotland. She purſued it to the end of her reign; and although King James, when he had more experience, and was better adviſed, kept ſuch meaſures with her as were neceſſary to ſecure and to facilitate his ſucceſſion, yet this wiſe Queen continued to give quite another attention to the affairs of Scotland, than ſhe gave to thoſe of any other country; or would have given to theſe, if Scotland had been divided from England by the ſea.

Is it impoſſible to make theſe reflections, and not to reflect, at the ſame time, on that happy change which the union of the two kingdoms has brought about? We are now one nation under one government, and muſt therefore always have one common intereſt; the ſame friends, the ſame foes, the ſame principles of ſecurity, and of danger. It is by conſequence now in our power, to take the intire advantage of our ſituation; an advantage which would make us ample amends for ſeveral which we want, and which ſome of our neighbours poſſeſs; an advantage, which, conſtantly attended to, and wiſely improved, would place the Britiſh nation in ſuch circumſtances of happineſs and glory as the greateſt empires could never boaſt. Far from being alarmed at every motion on the continent, far from being oppreſſed for the ſupport of foreign ſchemes, we might enjoy the ſecureſt peace, and the moſt unenvied plenty. Far from courting or purchaſing the alliances of other nations, we might ſee them ſuing for ours. Far from being hated or deſpiſed, for involving ourſelves in all the little wrangles of the continent, we might be loved and reſpected by all thoſe who maintain

tain the juſt balance of Europe, and be formidable to thoſe alone who ſhould endeavour to break it.

Having made theſe few reflections on that part of Queen Elizabeth's policy which regarded Scotland, it is neceſſary that we ſhould ſay ſomething of that which regarded the nations on the continent. Now with theſe it is very plain ſhe took the feweſt engagements ſhe poſſibly could, and ſhunned as induſtriouſly the occaſions of mingling her intereſts and counſels with theirs, as ſhe ſought the occaſions of mingling both with thoſe of Scotland.

We believe, upon very good grounds, that periods of four or five years might be pointed out, in which this nation hath been made a party to more treaties than were made by Queen Elizabeth in the courſe of forty-five years; and yet we preſume it will not be eaſy to ſhew, that this nation had more imminent dangers to avoid, and more formidable powers to reſiſt; or that ſuch ends were attained with greater glory and ſucceſs at theſe, or any other periods, than in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Let us deſcend into ſome particulars.

With the northern crowns ſhe kept in terms of amity, and good correſpondence; and had ſome negotiations with that of Denmark, concerning the intereſts of her ſubjects in trade. The ſame intereſts drew her into negotiations with the Muſcovite, and ſhe found means to conduct them to her great advantage.

The ſettlement made in Germany, a little before the abdication of Charles the fifth, continued. The Proteſtants were quiet there, and deſirous to remain ſo. The general intereſt of religion did not call upon her to look that way; and

it is evident, by the whole conduct of her reign, that she thought the particular interests of her kingdom very little concerned in those of the empire.

How attentive soever she might be to penetrate into the councils of the court of Rome, and to trace the intrigues of the vatican from their source; she bore no part whatever in the affairs of Italy.

In short, as all the measures she took in foreign affairs are considered relatively to the situation of England, she had nothing to do in the much greatest part of the business of the continent; and she was so far from entering into engagements by treaty, that she was scarce ever concerned in negotiations about it In France, Spain, and the Low Countries she had more to do; but even there the part she took was strictly no more, than the security and welfare of her own kingdoms required; and she acted it in no other manner than was suitable to the situation of England.

The state of Scotland, of Ireland, and for some time of England itself, gave her just reason to apprehend, that the French, or Spaniards, or both, might get footing there. Each of these had, at different times, pretensions of their own to her crown. The cause of Mary Queen of Scotland, afforded them, for a long time, both pretence and opportunity; and the united force of the Roman-catholic party was, at all times, ready to support their enterprises. Spain was the greatest maritime power in Europe, and able to attempt the invasion of England, even when Queen Elizabeth had been above thirty years on the throne, and had raised her navy from the low condition in which she found it.

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In a word, the whole coaſt, from the Streight of Gibraltar almoſt to Jutland, belonged to France and Spain. Such circumſtances formed a conjuncture, wherein theſe two powers had advantages againſt her, which they could have had in no other; and if ſhe was obliged to act towards them in a different manner from what ſhe did towards the other powers of the continent, it was becauſe ſhe ſtood expoſed to loſe, at leaſt in part, with reſpect to them, the advantages of her ſituation.

How ſhe acted towards them, has been obſerved already. She amuſed them, and eluded their deſigns, by the moſt artful ſeries of management. She ſought no alliances againſt them with other nations, and though ſhe did not fail to abet and ſupport the inſurrections of their ſubjects, yet even with theſe ſhe was cautious of entering into engagements by treaty. She did it with the Huguenots by a treaty ſigned in 1562, which the Vidame of Chartres had negotiated. The ſucceſs of the treaty, and the ungrateful behaviour of the Huguenots to her, confirmed her in the principle of depending little on allies, and much on herſelf. She choſe rather to aſſiſt when and where ſhe thought fit, and to aſſiſt *gratis*, than to be tied down to the conſequences of conſtant obligations, for the notional advantage of reciprocal engagements.

In the year 1577, ſhe began to take ſo intimate a concern in the affairs of the Low Countries, that the moſt important counſels and reſolutions of thoſe ſtates were communicated to her, and ſhe lent them an hundred thouſand pounds; yet it does not ſeem probable, that ſhe entered ſo ſoon into a formal alliance with them, though ſuch an alliance be mentioned

tioned by Meteren, as well as Cambden, and inſerted from the former in the Collection of Treaties.

In the year 1585, the clouds gathered on every ſide, and threatened Queen Elizabeth with that terrible ſtorm, part of which fell upon her, and part of which ſhe averted. She beheld Philip maſter of Portugal as well as Spain. She beheld the Duke of Guiſe growing apace to be maſter of France. She ſaw theſe two princes cloſely united by principles, which might continue in force long enough to compleat her ruin. She ſaw the Low Countries almoſt quite reduced by the arms of Spain, and the Proteſtants of France in the utmoſt danger of being ſo by the league. Dangers from Ireland, and dangers from Scotland impended over her.

In ſuch a criſis, more terrible, as we apprehend, than any which has threatened this nation ſince that time, what was the conduct of our heroic Queen? Did ſhe immediately prepare to oppoſe theſe dangers, by making alliances on the continent? Did ſhe purchaſe acceſſions to theſe alliances? Did ſhe raiſe armies, and pay ſubſidies abroad? Did ſhe give guaranties to every prince and ſtate, who aſked them; and, in order to ward againſt one danger, ſow the ſeeds of many? By no means. She ſent indeed Sir Thomas Bodley to the King of Denmark, as well as to the Landgrave of Heſſe, and other Proteſtant princes of the empire, "to procure a "league for defence of their religion," ſays Cambden; but this league does not appear, nor any other effect of theſe negotiations. "As ſhe was ve-"ry ſaving of her money, it is likely, ſays Rapin, "that ſhe did not employ the moſt proper means

"to

" to bring the princes of Germany into her inte-
" reſts." She ſecured herſelf by a great deal of management on the ſide of Scotland. She aſſiſted the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Conde, with money and ſhips; and the ſole treaty ſhe made on the continent was that with the ſtates of the Low Countries, concluded the tenth of Auguſt 1585, at Noneſuch. Her chief dependence was upon her own ability and courage; upon the affection and zeal of her people. Neither failed her. Sure of being attacked, ſhe began the attack. Whilſt Cavendiſh pillaged the coaſts of Chili and Peru, ſhe ſent Drake to the coaſts of Spain, with orders " to burn all the Spaniſh ſhips he ſhould meet." Her orders were executed with the ſpirit with which they were given. More than an hundred veſſels, loaded with proviſion and ammunition, were burnt at Gibraltar. The Spaniſh admiral was inſulted at the mouth of the Tagus, and the Spaniards were taken, or deſtroyed, even under his eyes; an infamy ſo great, that the ſuffering of it was ſcarce in example before that time. The riches, coming from the Indies to Spain, fell into the hands of the Engliſh. The projects of Philip were diſappointed in the year 1587, and when the invaſion was attempted in the year 1588, his army was blocked up in the ports of the Low Countries, and his invincible armada was beat, ſcattered, and deſtroyed.

We have now gone through all we propoſe to ſay at this time, concerning the conduct of Queen Elizabeth, both at home and abroad; concerning that conduct, which, by convincing her people of her goodneſs and her wiſdom, procured from them thoſe large returns of gratitude, of duty, of affection,

on, and zeal, the ſole foundations on which ſhe reſted her authority and her ſecurity; and the ſole foundations on which they can be reſted, ſuitably to the nature of our government. The limitations neceſſary to render monarchy conſiſtent with public liberty, muſt be many and great; for which reaſon it has been objected to them, that they took off from that weight of authority, and reſtrained that fulneſs of power, which are many times neceſſary to be exerted, even for the good of the whole community. If this objection was well founded, it would be a ſufficient anſwer, to ſay, that a few accidental inconveniencies which may happen, and which may be recompenſed too, in government, deſerve not to be prevented at the expence of leaving liberty perpetually expoſed. But the reign of Queen Elizabeth proves, beyond contradiction, that a prince like her will enjoy, at the head of the freeſt people on earth, all the authority, and all the power neceſſary to promote the joint ſecurity, proſperity, and glory of prince and people; ſo that all the objections which can be raiſed on this ſide to the Britiſh conſtitution of government, will center here; that it has not provided for ſtrengthening and enlarging the authority and power of a weak or wicked prince.

A prince who never ſeparates the intereſts juſt mentioned, and who purſues them wiſely, will have abſolute power in the moſt limited monarchy. A prince who ſeparates theſe intereſts, turns government itſelf into faction; and the ſpirit of liberty will riſe againſt him. An arbitrary government is ſuited to any character. A free government requires a great, at leaſt, a good one. In the former, all kinds and degrees of power are in the prince, or

flow

flow from him. In the latter, his powers are limited and confined. When he wants to increaſe, or extend them, he muſt derive the faculty of doing ſo from his people; and from hence it follows, that as long as ſuch a conſtitution remains intire, and uncorrupted, the proſperity, nay the eaſe, and even the ſecurity of the government, will depend on the diſpoſition of the people towards the prince; as the diſpoſition of the people will always depend on the behaviour of the prince towards the people. Queen Elizabeth ſaw theſe truths in all their force. She was both willing and able to proportion her conduct to them. She never felt therefore any want of power. She was ſupported by the ſpirit of liberty; and ſhe overcame that of faction. Some of her ſucceſſors either did not ſee theſe truths in all their force, or were unable to proportion their conduct to them. Theſe princes, therefore, felt the limitations of our monarchy like ſhackles upon them. The ſpirit of liberty either oppoſed, or did not ſupport them; and they nurſed up a ſpirit of faction to the ruin of themſelves, of their families, and almoſt of the nation.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

THE ſcene we are now going to open, will appear vaſtly different from that which we have juſt cloſed. Inſtead of an uninterrupted, pleaſing harmony of government, we ſhall meet with a perpetual, jarring diſſonance; inſtead of ſucceſs and glory abroad, diſappointment and contempt; inſtead of ſatisfaction, proſperity, and union at home, diſcontent, diſtreſs, and at laſt civil war, will preſent themſelves to us in all their horrors.

To conſider this melancholy change, and to ſhew from whence it proceeded, (whether from the prince or from the people), is our preſent buſineſs. That it was brought about and carried on by faction, muſt not be denied The ſole queſtion will therefore be, which was the factious ſide? Now, to determine this, we need only enquire, which ſide was for uſurping on the other; which was for preſerving, and which for altering, the eſtabliſhed conſtitution of government. On this point the queſtion will turn; for, in a country of liberty, in a limited monarchy, whatever ſome perſons may think, or deſire to have believed, it is certain that there may be faction for the crown, as well as againſt the crown. The reaſon is plain. There may be conſpiracies againſt liberty, as well as againſt prerogative. Private intereſt may ſcreen, or defend a bad adminiſtration, as well as attack or undermine a good one. In ſhort, conſpiring againſt one part of the conſtitution, in favour of another, or perverting, to the

ſupport

ſupport of national grievances, the very means which were inſtituted to redreſs them, are deſtructive of the whole frame of ſuch a government, and are the proper characteriſtics of faction.

On which ſide faction, thus defined, is likely to be found the oftener, and to act the moſt effectually, we ſhall not ſtay to examine here. They who have read the firſt of theſe letters, may remember what is there ſaid, to ſhew the difference between the motives and the means, which a prince hath of uſurping on his people; and thoſe which the people have of encroaching on their prince. We ſhall only obſerve, to our preſent purpoſe, that as he who confines his notions of faction to oppoſitions made to the crown, reaſons, in an abſolute monarchy, in favour of the conſtitution; ſo he who confines them thus, in a limited monarchy againſt the conſtitution; is weak enough to deceive himſelf, or wicked enough to attempt deceiving others; and, in either caſe, is thus far a betrayer of public liberty. On ſuch principles as theſe we ſaid, in our laſt letter, "that government itſelf might be turned in-"to faction; and that ſome of Queen Elizabeth's "ſucceſſors had nurſed up a ſpirit of faction, to "the ruin of themſelves, of their families, and al-"moſt of the nation." We preſume that this will appear, in the courſe of our enquiries, to be undeniably true; and that there will be as little room to doubt whether the factious conduct of the court, in the reign of King James and Charles the firſt, gave a riſe to all the ſtruggles between them and their people, as there is room to deny, that the deſtruction of our conſtitution, in church and in ſtate, was the dreadful conſequence of theſe ſtruggles. The

ſpirit of liberty, and the Britiſh conſtitution of government, whoſe cauſe we are pleading, and whoſe cauſe we are ſorry that there ſhould be ſo much occaſion to plead, will therefore, we hope, remain clear of all imputations.

We wiſh that this juſtice could be done without opening wounds, which are hardly yet entirely healed, and without arraigning the conduct of princes, whoſe memories have been held in great veneration by many worthy perſons; but ſince this cannot be, nay, ſince the opening of theſe wounds may contribute to the more effectual healing of them; and ſince arraigning the conduct of theſe princes hath been rendered the more neceſſary by the accounts which have been given of it, and by the principles on which it hath been defended; we muſt ſpeak with the ſame liberty of them, as we have uſed in ſpeaking of thoſe who reigned before them.

The Egyptians paid ſo much reſpect to their very limited monarchs, that when they meant to warn theſe princes againſt particular vices, they commended them for oppoſite virtues. We cannot perſuade ourſelves that this method of reforming or inſtructing by panegyric, (the uſual and moſt deadly poiſon of other princes), had a good effect on thoſe of Egypt. But however this might be, when theſe princes were dead, notwithſtanding the reſpect ſhewn to them living, * they underwent the ſame trial as the cuſtom of the kingdom had eſtabliſhed for all private perſons, and funeral honours were equally denied to them, and to the meaneſt and moſt guilty of their ſubjects, when their memories were con-

* Diodor. Sic. l. ii. c. 3.

demned,

demned, on a ſolemn and ſtrict examination of the conduct they had held in life.

Though we propoſe to enquire with all this freedom, and though we are perſuaded that the reſult of theſe enquiries will be a confirmation of what hath been advanced by us; yet are we very far from admitting any of the objections which have been made to the conduct of King James and King Charles the firſt. Much leſs do we approve thoſe cruel inſinuations againſt them which are to be found in ſeveral invectives, not hiſtories, dictated by a ſpirit of faction, not by the ſpirit of liberty. The ſpirit of liberty reflects on the errors of princes with ſorrow, not with triumph, and is unwilling to aggravate what it wiſhes had never happened In the temper which this ſpirit inſpires, therefore, we ſhall proceed. We ſhall dwell on no facts, but ſuch as we think uncontroverted; and ſhall make no reflections, nor draw any conſequences from them, but ſuch as ariſe naturally and without the leaſt force. The truth would not be ſo evident, as we preſume it is in this caſe, if any thing more was neceſſary to the illuſtration of it.

Amongſt the many advantages which King James had, on his acceſſion to the throne of England, we might very juſtly reckon the recent example of his predeceſſor. Her penetration diſcovered the conſequences of that great change in the balance of property, of which we have ſpoken in letters XI. and XII.; and ſhe accommodated at once the whole ſyſtem of her government to it, as we have there obſerved. Whatever doubts ſhe might have entertained, concerning the ſucceſs of her own meaſures, before ſhe had experienced the happy effects of them, King James could reaſonably entertain none. Ex-

perience, as well as reaſon, pointed out to him the ſole principle on which he could eſtabliſh his government with advantage, or even with ſafety; and Queen Elizabeth's reign had every year afforded him freſh proofs, that this principle of government, which is eaſy in the purſuit, is effectual in the end to all the purpoſes which a good man, and a juſt prince, can deſire to obtain. But King James paid as little regard to her example, as he did to her memory. In the laſt reſpect he was indecent. In the other unwiſe. He boaſted moſt ridiculouſly of an influence which he never had over her councils. Happy would it have been for him, for his family, and for this whole nation, if her example had really had a due influence over his conduct; or, at leaſt, if his example had obtained leſs influence over the conduct of his ſucceſſor. Fraught with learning, not with knowledge; ignorant of the true principles of government; more a ſtranger to our conſtitution by his notions and his habits of thinking, than to our country by his birth; obſtinate, though not ſteady; miſled by ſelf-opinion, and confirmed in error by ſuperlative pedantry, King James the firſt ſeemed to expect the love, and to demand the obedience of his ſubjects, purely becauſe the crown had dropt on his head. Whereas Queen Elizabeth ſeemed, both by her declarations and her actions, to think herſelf intitled to the firſt, and ſecure of the laſt, for no other reaſon than this, becauſe ſhe wore the crown to the greateſt advantage of her people. Her good ſenſe taught her what he had not found in his books, that the ties between prince and people are not the ſame with thoſe between particular perſons in private life. Theſe perſons converſe and live

live familiarly together. Natural sympathies therefore, more easily to be felt than described, may unite them, without the motives of gratitude or expectation. Those common, good offices, which the heart alone suggests, are often sufficient to maintain such unions; and a man who is neither a saint nor a hero, may hope to find and keep a friend. But public, or political, or state-friendship, by which we mean an intimate and affectionate union between the governors and the governed, cannot be contradicted without gratitude or expectation, nor maintained without both. If it could, if subjects were attached to their prince by a kind of instinct, as hard to be accounted for, and yet as prevalent as the sympathies we have mentioned; the assertors of the divine right of princes, and of the universal obedience due to them, would have had long ago a more plausible argument than they have yet produced in favour of their doctrines. They would have been able to stop the mouths of all gainsayers, even of him who required a miracle to become their convert; and who resolved never to believe that slavery was of divine institution, till he beheld subjects born with bunches on their backs, like camels; and kings with combs on their heads, like cocks; from which marks it might be collected, that the former were designed to labour and to suffer, and the latter to strut and to crow. But till some such miracle is wrought, or the instinct supposed above is born with men, we think it will remain true, that the union we speak of between prince and people, neither can nor ought to subsist on any other terms, than those of good government on one part, and of gratitude and expectation on the other. This union

may be, and hath been maintained by abſolute princes with their people; becauſe it is not impoſſible that an abſolute prince ſhould be a wiſe and a good man; and becauſe ſome ſuch there have been. But here lies a difference. The abſolute monarch may exert the whole power of the ſtate. He may govern eaſily, ſafely, and with all other advantages, though he neglects to cultivate this union; or, which is worſe, though he breaks it. But the caſe of a limited monarch is not the ſame, for the reaſons which we touched upon at the end of our laſt letter. It is therefore the immediate, the perſonal, the higheſt intereſt of ſuch a prince, as it is the duty of every prince, to contract this union, and to maintain it inviolate. The wiſdom of our conſtitution hath made it ſo; and, in making it ſo, hath imitated that divine wiſdom which appears in the conſtitution of the moral world. In this it may be eaſily proved, from a conſideration of the circumſtances in which we ſtand as individuals, that the general good of ſociety is the particular intereſt of every member. Our Creator deſigned, therefore, that we ſhould promote this general good. It is by conſequence our duty to do ſo; and every man who believes a wiſe all directing mind, and who knows that proportioning of means to ends is eſſential to wiſdom, muſt ſubſcribe to this opinion. And yet, determined by falſe appearances of good, or attracted by the force of immediate objects, men may, and they frequently do, imagine that they purſue their particular and ſeparate intereſt, whilſt they neglect, or act againſt the general and common intereſt of ſociety.

In like manner, King James the firſt, and thoſe princes

princes who have trod in his ſteps, imagined no doubt that they purſued a particular, ſeparate intereſt of their own, whilſt they neglected an union with their people, and even made ſuch an union impracticable, by tranſgreſſing, in pretenſions and in fact, the bounds, which our conſtitution preſcribed to them. But the miſtake is equal in both caſes; for in both caſes, intereſt and duty remain indiviſibly united, however they may be ſeparated in opinion; and he, who ſins againſt one, ſins moſt certainly againſt the other; though the natural conſequences of his actions do not appear immediately, nor on every occaſion, to follow.

Theſe conſequences followed in a ſignal and terrible manner upon the occaſions, which we have mentioned, and into the particulars of which we ſhall deſcend ſome other time. Theſe examples therefore are compleat. The cauſes and the effects come together under our view; and if we carry our obſervations forward to later times, we ſhall ſee cauſes of the ſame kind laid again, and producing effects of the ſame nature; effects always proportionable to them; ſometimes jealouſy, diſcontent, tumult; ſometimes open reſiſtance, and depoſition of the prince; for though, in all theſe caſes, the people have ſuffered, as well as the prince; yet, in ſome, the prince alone hath been undone; and thus, by an equal diſtribution of juſtice, the principal ſhare of the common calamity hath fallen on him, without whom no part of it could have happened.

Though theſe general reflections, which we have premiſed, may appear long to ſome of our readers, and may ſeem too nearly allied to reflections already made;

made; yet we hope for indulgence, on account of the importance of the matter. It muſt ſurely be of uſe to explain, very clearly and very fully, from whence the weakneſs of our government, at ſome times, and the diſorders and revolutions of it, at others, have proceeded ſince that æra, when our liberties became better ſecured, and our conſtitution capable of greater improvements, by a new ſettlement of the balance of property and power. No point hath been more miſtaken. None hath been more artfully miſrepreſented.

LETTER XVIII.

WE have obſerved already of how great advantage the example of Queen Elizabeth might have been to King James the firſt. It might have taught him to ſtruggle through the moſt intricate difficulties. But he had none ſuch to encounter, till he created them by his own management. On the contrary, his acceſſion to the throne of England was accompanied with all the favourable circumſtances of eaſe and ſecurity, which were neceſſary to form a conjuncture proper for him; ſo that with abilities much inferior to thoſe of his predeceſſor, he might have reigned as glorioufly abroad, and as happily at home. Many of the difficulties and dangers, which ſurrounded her, were perſonal to her. They aroſe from her birth; from her title; and from that, which Mary Queen of Scotland pretended. They therefore ceaſed with her. Many others ſhe had conquered by a wiſe and ſteady adminiſtration. Many had been worn out by length of time; and many had been ſo changed by the courſe of events, that King James was ſafe, where ſhe was moſt in danger; and ſtrong, where ſhe was weakeſt. His title was not conteſted; nor any oppoſition, either open or ſecret, given to his ſucceſſion. They, who had founded ſo high the right of his mother, could not refuſe to acknowledge the ſame right in him; and the reſt of the nation ſubmitted to it; for how little regard ſoever many of them might pay to this right

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in their hearts, or how great ſuſpicion ſoever of his future conduct might be juſtly infuſed into them by his paſt behaviour, the people would have a king, and there was no other prince, in whom the proteſtant intereſt could unite at that time. The riddle of a plot, in which Sir Walter Raleigh was involved, does not deſerve to be mentioned, as an exception to the national unanimity we ſpeak of. True it is that in other reſpects, the nation was far from being united, either by a conformity of opinion, or by an acquieſcence of thoſe, who differed from the eſtabliſhment. It was, no doubt, a ſevere misfortune, and ſuch it continues to this very hour, that the great and glorious work of the reformation, being carried on at different times, and in different places, was carried on likewiſe without a general concert. The ſeveral churches reformed themſelves, according to the different circumſtances they were in, and according to the different characters of the few, who led the many in each of them. The ſeparation of them all from the church of Rome was intire; but in ſome, it was thought proper to reform; in others, to alter the whole model; in ſome, many things were retained, which had been in practice before the reformation; in others, a total oppoſition to every inſtance of conformity with the church of Rome ſeemed to be the ſole ſtandard of chriſtian purity. This variety of opinions and eſtabliſhments amongſt the reformed was a great evil in itſelf; but this evil was aggravated by a circumſtance of the moſt fatal conſequence. The reformers, and eſpecially thoſe who came lateſt, as our excellent Mr. Hooker * obſerves, by enforcing too peremptorily their particu-

* Eccl. polity, pref.

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lar modes of reformation, brought the people in many caſes to receive and reſpect, as divine laws, even thoſe orders and that diſcipline, which expediency or other political motives had ſuggeſted. Now the natural tendency of this perſuaſion was not only to render all comprehenſion, or reconciliation amongſt the reformed churches, impracticable; but to make the diviſions in any particular church, incurable. Thus, when Queen Elizabeth compleated that eſtabliſhment of a church which Edward the ſixth had begun, many diſſented from it; and the ſcruples of private conſcience were pleaded againſt ſubmiſſion to the public authority of the ſtate. If regard had been paid to all, who petitioned the Queen, or admoniſhed the parliament, in the heat of theſe times, it ſeems probable that no eſtabliſhment at all could have been made; and if none had been made, an eccleſiaſtical anarchy muſt have enſued. How far the number of ſeparatiſts might have been leſſened by more compliances with the learned and moderate amongſt them, (for ſuch there certainly were) we ſhall neither preſume to determine, nor go about to enquire. It is ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe to obſerve, that although theſe ſeeds of diſturbance had been ſowed before the acceſſion of King James; yet no diſturbance had happened, nor was any likely to happen at that time. The meaſures, which had been purſued, and the temper which had been obſerved in Queen Elizabeth's reign, tended to diminiſh the religious oppoſition by a ſlow, a gentle, and for that very reaſon an effectual progreſſion; and, in the mean while, to prevent ſuch conſequences of it, as might diſorder or weaken the go-

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vernment. By the laws which were made the ſeveral diſſenting ſects were diſcouraged, and kept in awe; but by the execution of theſe laws, they were not exaſperated. They were puniſhed, not provoked. They felt the weight of the government, as often as they attempted to diſturb it, but they never felt the oppreſſion of party; and when they were treated like factions, they had not the pretence to complain that they were treated ſo by faction. Upon this foot there was even room to hope, that when the firſt fire of theſe mens zeal was ſpent, reaſonable terms of union with the eſtabliſhed church might be accepted by ſuch of them as were not intoxicated with fanaticiſm. Such as theſe were friends to order, though they diſputed about it, and could have the leſs pretence to reject, with obſtinacy, that which had been ſettled by Queen Elizabeth, becauſe they knew that their own diſcipline had been eſtabliſhed where it prevailed, as the Church of England had been, by the ſupreme authority; that it had been made a law of the country; that the people had been bound by oath to the maintenance of it; and that Calvin himſelf had been a moſt rigorous exactor of conformity to it. If ſuch as theſe had been once incorporated with the eſtabliſhed church, the remaining ſectaries would have been of little moment, either for numbers or reputation; and the very means, which were proper to gain theſe, were likewiſe the moſt effectual to hinder the increaſe of them, and of the other ſectaries in the mean time. Upon the whole matter, we think it very plain that King James the firſt, beſides the advantage of coming to the crown, after all the difficulties and dangers of compleating the reformation, and eſtabliſh-

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ing a new church were over, had an eaſy and ſecure opportunity of preventing any bad conſequences, which might be apprehended from the diviſions of his Proteſtant ſubjects; and that the improvement of this opportunity conſiſted in giving neither alarm to the well-affected, nor pretence to the factious.

The deſigns of the Roman-catholic party, againſt the conſtitution in church and ſtate, were carried on with as much rage, but not with as much ſtrength as ever. The hydra heads, which ſprouted continually out of that body in the former reign, had been lopt ſo often, that they appeared more rarely; and if the venom of that principle, which produced them, was not abated; yet many of the ſprings which fed and nouriſhed it, were exhauſted. The Guiſes, Mary Queen of Scotland, Philip the ſecond, were dead. The reformation was eſtabliſhed; not only in outward form, but in the hearts of men. It was grown to be a part, and a favourite part, of the conſtitution. The ſpirit of liberty had blended our civil and religious rights together, and was become equally jealous of both. Let us add (for we may add it with great juſtice) that the Church of England was, by the ſobriety, wiſdom, and ſanctity of her inſtitution, eſtabliſhed on a rock; that this rock was defended by the greateſt number of excellent men, which any Chriſtian church could boaſt of; and from all this let us conclude, that as ſhe was able to reſiſt the attacks of thoſe ſects, which private conceit, miſtaken zeal, ſome enthuſiaſm, and perhaps ſome faction had nurſed up in her own boſom; ſo ſhe was better able than any other Proteſtant church to de-

ſend herſelf, and the ſtate too, againſt the fallacies, the ſeductions, and the violence of Rome. The policy of this court ſaw it, and neglected nothing to prevent the conſequences. Seminaries had been erected at Doway and other places abroad, for the education of Engliſh youth in Popery. Gregory the thirteenth had given the direction of that, which was erected at Rome, to the Jeſuits; and upon that occaſion theſe incendiaries crept into England. If we may believe ſome accounts, they mingled themſelves amongſt the clergy of the Church of England and the Puritan miniſters. That they took all methods to foment our diviſions is probable; and that they were not men, who would ſtick at any, may be certainly collected from that account of their conduct here, and of the doctrines they taught, which is contained in the complaints exhibited againſt them by the reſt of the * Popiſh clergy.

Thus was the ſpirit of the church and court of Rome kept up here, even at the time of the acceſſion of King James; a ſpirit, which might ſerve to bring about an aſſaſſination, or any barbarous and deſperate ſtroke, (like that of the gun-powder treaſon) which a few enthuſiaſts were capable of executing; but not to ſubvert the reformation, and introduce Popery anew. The efforts of this party now were like the laſt convulſions of a ſtrong body, mortally wounded; frightful to behold; ſufficient to hurt others; but tokens of death, not ſymptoms of recovery. King James had it therefore in his power to keep down with eaſe a party, which Queen Elizabeth had ſubdued with pain; and whatever im-

* THUAN. lib. 126.

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preſſion the bloody deſigns they had often formed, and ſometimes brought to effect, might make on his mind; certain it was, and the event made that certainty undeniable, that no degree of favour to them, except the utmoſt, could effectually ſecure him againſt their attempts; and that the leaſt degree of favour ſhewn, or encouragement given them, would be productive of the greateſt national miſchief.

We have dwelt the longer on theſe points of religious diviſions, becauſe we think a clear and juſt notion of them abſolutely neceſſary to fix a right opinion, concerning one of the principal cauſes, which were laid in this reign, of all the national calamities, that followed. We ſhall mention the other advantages, which attended King James the firſt, as briefly as we can; not becauſe they were ſmall, (for on the contrary, they were exceedingly great) but becauſe they are more notorious, and have no need of being ſo much developed, in order to be made ſenſible.

Thus, for inſtance, the different condition, in which he found the navy, the commerce, and the wealth of the nation, as well as the revenues of the crown, from that in which Queen Elizabeth had found them all at her acceſſion, is known in general by every one, who hath dipt into hiſtory. Without entering into more particulars therefore than we have done already, we may venture to conclude that he reaped the benefit of her œconomy, and was a rich, as well as a powerful king. We know very well that when the ſeſſion of parliament was opened by commiſſion in 1610, by the Earls of Suffolk and Saliſbury, one of the reaſons urged for demanding money of the commons, was grounded

on a debt of Queen Elizabeth, which was ſaid to have abſorbed 350,000 l. due on the laſt ſubſidies granted to her. If this fact was true, all that reſulted from it is; firſt, that Queen Elizabeth left a mortgage on the lands of the crown, and money enough to diſcharge it; ſecondly, that King James parted with his money to recover his lands; and we ſhall not oppoſe any perſon, who will charitably believe that this prince would have paid the debts of his predeceſſor, though they had not been thus ſecured, out of the money ſhe left in her coffers; becauſe to have done otherwiſe, would have been a manifeſt violation of all the rules of religion, honour and common morality. But we much doubt even this averment of the lords, who opened the ſeſſion, will have any great weight, when it ſhall be conſidered that their whole diſcourſe was too miniſterial to be ſincere; and that ſome of the reaſons, by which they accounted for the King's want of money (ſuch, for inſtance, as the charge of protecting his wife and children from being robbed on the road to London) were really burleſque.

The advantages which this prince had in the ſituation of foreign affairs, both at his acceſſion to the throne, and during the greateſt part of his reign, were remarkably great; and we doubt whether it is poſſible to find more than one conjuncture equally favourable ſince that time. Philip the third was on the throne of Spain; a prince of ſmall capacity, and leſs application; governed by his favourite, and his favourite deteſted by the people. Before the end of King James's reign he died; and Philip the fourth, his ſon, ſucceeded; a youth of ſixteen years old, and governed as abſolutely by Olivarez, as his fa-

father had been by the Duke of Lerma. The declenſion of the Spaniſh monarchy haſtened on apace, under theſe princes. It is ſaid that Philip the third refuſed to ſupport the Roman-catholic party, in the beginning of the reign of King James; which is the more probable, on account of the early and precipitate ſteps made by this prince, towards a peace with Spain. The defeat of Don John d'Aquila in Ireland, and the entire reduction of Tyrone, which happened a little before the death of Queen Elizabeth, diſcouraged the Spaniards from making any more attempts of that kind. They turned their eyes from theſe iſlands to the continent; to the Low Countries and to Germany, where they continued during the courſe of many years, to conſume their remains of ſtrength, in abetting the ambitious projects of that branch of the houſe of Auſtria.

As King James had nothing to apprehend from the enmity of Spain, ſo he was ſecure of the friendſhip of France. Henry the fourth was now eſtabliſhed on that throne. He was in peace indeed with Spain, but intended not to be ſo long. We are very far from believing that this prince could ſeriouſly entertain ſo chimerical a project as that of making an entire new ſettlement of Europe, by dividing it into fifteen ſtates, which Perefixe and other authors have related, upon the faith of the compilers of Sully's memoirs; but, without doubt, he had great views of checking the ambition, and reducing the power of the houſe of Auſtria. It was therefore his intereſt to live well with the king of Great Britain; and accordingly he ſent the Marquis of Roſny, afterwards Duke of Sully, to renew the treaties with King James, as ſoon almoſt as this

prince was ſeated on the throne of England. When Henry the fourth was ſtabbed by Ravaillac, a minority followed in France, and the councils of that court were, for many years chiefly employed about their own affairs; ſo that nothing could happen on that ſide, even after this great change, to give the leaſt diſturbance to King James.

The ſtates of the Low Countries were no longer in the ſame diſtreſſed condition. Their commonwealth had taken form; their naval force was increaſing; and their commerce extending itſelf every day. Oſtend kept the Spaniſh forces at bay for more than three years; and when Spinola made himſelf maſter of that heap of ruins, the Dutch thought themſelves ſufficiently recompenſed by the acquiſition, which they had made, in the mean time, of Sluyce and other important places. The truce of eight months between Spain and the States was ſigned in 1607. It was prolonged afterwards; and in the year 1609, the truce of twelve years was concluded at Antwerp; by which the King of Spain was forced to acknowledge the liberty and independency of the United Provinces. Thus was that commonwealth eſtabliſhed, to be a great and laſting acceſſion of ſtrength to the Proteſtant intereſt; and King James might have reaped the benefit of an uſeful alliance, where Queen Elizabeth had no other advantage than that of defending the oppreſſed, and diverting the forces of a common enemy.

The affairs of the north, indeed, were in great confuſion about the ſame time. The crown of Sweden belonged to Sigiſmund in the courſe of deſcent; but Sigiſmund was a Papiſt and King of Poland.

land. For both theſe reaſons he had been excluded, and his uncle Charles preferred to the throne by the ſtates of Sweden; who provided by the act of ſettlement, not only that their Kings ſhould be of the religion of the country, but that none of the princes of the Royal Family ſhould accept another crown, nor any foreign dominions. Their experience, it ſeems, had ſhewn them the neceſſity of ſuch limitations. This gave occaſion to thoſe long and cruel wars, which followed between Sweden and Poland. Others ſucceeded between Sweden and Denmark; but the ſcene of them all was ſo remote, and the intereſts of this country ſo abſolutely unconcerned in the events of them, that he, who ſhould have adviſed King James to take any part in them, would have paſſed, in thoſe days, for a very bad politician.

The indolent Rodolphus ſlept on the throne of the empire till the year 1614. His brother Matthias ſucceeded him, and their couſin Ferdinand ſucceeded Matthias. During the reign of Rodolphus, there were troubles in Hungary, in Tranſilvania, in Bohemia, and in ſeveral parts of the empire. Moſt of them were cauſed, all of them were fomented, by religious diviſions. During the reign of Matthias theſe troubles encreaſed. They grew up to maturity, as the acceſſion of Ferdinand to the empire approached. The Bohemians, long oppreſſed, and long provoked, took arms at laſt in 1618. Many cauſes conſpired to render all accommodation impracticable. Amongſt the principal were the deſigns which all the branches of the houſe of Auſtria had laid, and begun to execute, againſt liberty and the Proteſtant religion in Germany; the charac-

character of Ferdinand, violent, cruel, a bigot, though artful; and, to ſpeak impartially, the ambition of Frederick, elector palatine. If this ambition had been the ſole motive to engage King James in theſe quarrels, we muſt think that he could not have anſwered to his own people the engaging in them, as popular as the Palatine, his wife, and his cauſe were in England. But theſe quarrels were of another importance. Frederick loſt not only the crown of Bohemia, but his own patrimony. The Proteſtant religion, and the liberty of Germany, were well nigh ſacrificed to the bigotry and ambition of the Emperor; ſo that the intereſt of this nation, as well as the King's family-intereſt, was very much concerned to prevent theſe conſequences; and yet, upon this foot, we muſt likewiſe think that it would not have been long popular in thoſe days, when the memory of Queen Elizabeth's policy was freſh in the minds of men, to have maintained great armies on the continent, and to have fed with ſubſidies ſo many hungry princes, who had, at leaſt in the beginning, nothing leſs at heart than the common intereſt.

This difficult and dangerous ſituation of affairs on the continent, in which we allow that King James ought to have taken ſome part, may be thought, perhaps, to form an exception to what hath been ſaid, concerning thoſe circumſtances of advantage, of eaſe, and ſecurity, which accompanied the reign of this prince; but there will be room to think ſo no longer, when it ſhall be conſidered, that King James had time and means to prepare for this critical conjuncture. The diſtreſs in foreign affairs began with Queen Elizabeth's reign; and

and ſhe was in danger abroad, before ſhe was ſettled on her throne at home; but he had reigned near eighteen years, before any thing happened on the continent which could give him a juſt occaſion of acting vigorouſly in that ſcene. Beſides, when this occaſion did happen, he had it in his power to have acted with great glory to himſelf, and effectually for the ſervice of thoſe, whom it was his intereſt to ſupport, without taking any other part than that which becomes a King of England, in oppoſition to that which becomes a prince on the continent, and agreeably to the principles of his predeceſſor's conduct. This will appear evidently true, when we come to conſider the part he did take; and we ſhall inſiſt upon it the rather, becauſe we obſerve with how much affectation, the caſe we are now ſpeaking of hath been quoted, as parallel to the preſent ſituation of affairs; and how impertinently it hath been taken for granted, that King James the firſt was condemned in his own time, and hath been condemned ſince, for not doing what theſe time-ſerving politicians recommend; that is, for entangling himſelf in the affairs of the empire, as if he had been a prince of the empire; and for not acting on every appearance of danger, or even of inconveniency, to any little ſtate of Germany, in ſuch a manner as is agreeable neither to the intereſt nor ſituation of our iſland.

What hath been ſaid may be ſufficient to ſhew, how few the difficulties were, compared with the advantages, which King James had to encounter both at home and abroad; and how fortunate a conjuncture was prepared for him by the wiſdom of his

his predeceſſor, and by an happy combination of circumſtances. What uſe he made of theſe advantages, what conduct he held, and what conſequences he had, muſt be the ſubject of another diſcourſe.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

BY what hath been ſaid, in former letters, we think it appears, that from the time our conſtitution ſettled on the foundation on which it remains ſtill, there hath been not only no poſſibility of governing this nation with ſtrength and dignity, without the concurrence of the people in their repreſentative body, nor with eaſe and ſafety without their concurrence in their collective body; but that this concurrence hath depended, and does and muſt always depend, on the union of intereſt and affection between the King and his ſubjects.

We beg leave to repeat, that Queen Elizabeth ſaw this to be a ſure, and the only ſure principle, on which ſhe could eſtabliſh her government under ſuch a conſtitution; that ſhe very wiſely took the government on the terms of the conſtitution, and the conſtitution as ſhe found it; that inſtead of ſtruggling through trouble and danger to bend the conſtitution to any particular notions or views of her own, ſhe accommodated her notions, her views, and her whole character to it. Let us obſerve, by the way, that this is no more than what every prince ought to do; and what every free people will expect and exact too, if need be, that he ſhould do. He is made for their ſakes, not they for his. He is raiſed to maintain, not to alter the conſtitution.

Now King James begun and continued, through the

the whole courſe of his reign, to govern without any regard to this principle; nay, in abſolute defiance of it. He choſe other expedients of government, and truſted to ſo many broken reeds. Without any talents to procure the eſteem, he awakened the jealouſy, and never courted the good will of his people; but, inſtead of it, endeavoured to inſtil into their minds what was rooted in his own, a very good opinion of himſelf, and a very mean opinion of them. He endeavoured to perſuade men, who felt that the balance of property was on their ſide, and that they held a great ſhare of the ſupreme power in their hands, that though they had this property, yet they had no right, or a very precarious one, to this power. He meant, by the force of new-fangled opinions, to attach the nation to him, as Queen Elizabeth had done by the ties of affection and confidence; or he meant to govern without the concurrence of the nation; or he meant nothing. The firſt was chimerical, the ſecond was wicked, and the third was ſtupid. Elizabeth had been jealous of her prerogative, but moderate in the exerciſe of it. Wiſer James imagined, that the higher he carried it, and the more rigorouſly he exerted it, the more ſtrongly he ſhould be ſeated on his throne. He miſtook the weight for the ſtrength of a ſceptre; and did not conſider that it was never ſo likely to ſlip, or to be wrenched out of a prince's hands, as when it is heavieſt. He never reflected, that prerogative is of the nature of a ſpring, which, by much ſtraining, will certainly relax and often break; that in one caſe it becomes of little, and in the other of no uſe at all.

As abſurd as the notions and principles of govern-

vernment were, by which King James hoped to eſtabliſh his authority, he found numbers to adopt them; for numbers are at all times liable to be deceived, ready to be tempted, and prone to be corrupted. New ſyſtems of law and policy were not only received, but propagated. Some men were heated by oppoſition. Others were educated in prejudice. The plaineſt rights of the people were called in queſtion. The leaſt juſtifiable pretenſions of the crown were eſtabliſhed as true axioms of government, and certain principles of the Engliſh conſtitution. What father Paul obſerves to have happened in the church, happened here in the ſtate. Our court, like that of Rome, by affirming and denying boldly, and by inſiſting peremptorily, brought many things to be received as certain, which had been never proved, and many others to be looked upon as problematical, which had been often demonſtrated. Thus were thoſe diviſions created, which could alone render the others fatal. Diſputes about the uſe of the ſurplice, or the croſs in baptiſm, would not have unſheathed all the ſwords in the nation. Puritaniſm neither did, nor could make ſuch deadly wounds; but when they were once made, puritaniſm feſtered in the ſore, and rendered them mortal. King James conjured up, by uſing tricks of government, that ſtorm in which his ſucceſſor periſhed. His ſucceſſor, (for we will finiſh the ſketch we have begun), a religious and juſt prince, came a party-man to the throne. His prejudices, confirmed by habit, fortified by the flattery of his courtiers, and provoked by the oppoſition which his father and he met with, carried him to continue an invaſion on the people's rights,

whilſt he imagined himſelf only concerned in the defence of his own. The faction of the court tainted the nation, and gave life and ſtrength, if it did not give being, to the factions in the ſtate. If the ſpirit of liberty could have prevailed in time againſt the firſt, there had been no danger from the others. But the long and obſtinate reſiſtance of the firſt, gave time and opportunity, and even aſſiſtance, to the others to extinguiſh this ſpirit. Cavaliers and Roundheads divided the nation, like Yorkiſts and Lancaſtrians. No other option was left at laſt. To reconcile theſe diſputes by treaty became impracticable, when neither ſide would truſt the other. To terminate them by the ſword, was to fight not for preſerving the conſtitution, but for the manner of deſtroying it. The conſtitution might have been deſtroyed, under pretence of prerogative. It was deſtroyed under pretence of liberty. We might have fallen under abſolute monarchy. We fell into abſolute anarchy. The ſum of all is this. We were deſtroyed by faction; but faction prevailed at court near forty years before it prevailed amongſt the people. It was the original principle on one ſide. It was an accident on the other. Churchmen and royaliſts attacked the conſtitution. Puritans and commonwealth-men, and, above all, a motley race of preciſe knaves and enthuſiaſtic madmen ruined it. But the laſt could never have happened, if the firſt had not; and whoever will diſpaſſionately trace the cauſes of that deteſtable civil war, will find them laid in the conduct of King James the firſt, as early as his acceſſion to the throne of England.

Having given this general idea of the two reigns, which

which followed that of Queen Elizabeth, it is time to examine whether this idea of them can be ſupported by a ſeries of uncontroverted facts. Let us deſcend into ſome particulars.

" A prince that is invited, or comes newly to a " kingdom, ſays Wilſon, muſt have his chariot- " wheels ſmooth ſhod;" and ſurely if ever prince had motives, and an opportunity, to render himſelf popular, King James had both. Eſſex, Southampton, and others, (even Cecil, a principal miniſter of the late Queen), had held a correſpondence with him, for their own private intereſt; but the millions who ſubmitted to his acceſſion, ſubmitted to it upon truſt, and were determined by the nature of the conjuncture, not by any knowledge of the perſons who compoſed this new royal family. It was not therefore enough for them to be placed in and about the throne. Their true intereſt required, that the hearts of the people ſhould be gained to them; and that popularity ſhould ſupply that ſpirit in their favour, which ſeldom fails to operate in favour of thoſe princes, who are born and bred amongſt the people they are to govern. The opportunity of doing this lay fairly before King James. He was received with tranſports of joy, and all ranks of men made their court to him. If he looked on this national behaviour (for ſo it was) to be the effect of a deſire in the people to endear themſelves to him, and to unite cloſely with him; this ſhould have ſuggeſted to his mind the eaſe, with which he might acquire popularity, by improving the diſpoſition, and captivate the good-will of a people, ſo deſirous to be pleaſed with their King. If he looked on this national behaviour as the ef-

fect of levity, inconſtancy, and love of change, it ſhould have taught him to apprehend how ſoon this honey-moon would paſs away; how ſoon the ſtream of popular favour might turn againſt him; and how ſoon they, who ſeemed to have forgot Queen Elizabeth, might return to regret her. But that which a Scotſman foretold happened. This behaviour of the Engliſh ſpoiled a good king; or made a bad king worſe. It was natural for a vain man to believe what his flatterers told him, and what he, his own greateſt flatterer, told himſelf; that theſe applauſes and tranſports of the people were due to his eminent merit, and were an homage paid for the honour he did them in accepting their crown. He took therefore much ſtate. He did not indeed make his journey, as Henry the ſeventh made his entry into London, in a cloſe chariot; but he forbid by proclamation the concourſe of the people to him. "* He diſperſed them with frowns, that we "may not ſay with curſes." Such different turns of thought can vanity inſpire. Some will be reſpected like eaſtern monarchs, unſeen within the ſhrine of their court. Others grow fond of public triumphs; delight in noiſy acclamations; and are pleaſed to drive, like Indian pagods, over a proſtrate crowd.

As much as King James neglected to gain the public, even at the cheap price of affability, he ſunk into low familiarity with his favourites, and was profuſe of riches and honours to particular men. He beſtowed, at firſt, on a few, and afterwards on one man, that affection which he had promiſed the

* Wilſon

whole

whole nation, in ſome of the plauſible, common-place diſcourſes which he held at certain times. There is no need of mentioning the particular inſtances of a profuſion he acknowledged himſelf. The eſtates he gave to his courtiers impoveriſhed the crown; and, as it always happens, the people were forced to pay for thoſe very grants at which they murmured. Honours he beſtowed in ſo laviſh a manner, and with ſo little diſtinction, that they ceaſed, in ſome ſenſe, to be honours. To know the Britiſh nobility, it was become almoſt neceſſary to have nomenclators, like thoſe who attended the candidates at Rome, to tell them the names of the citizens. The jeſt went ſo far, that an advertiſement of * "An art to help weak memories to a "competent knowledge of the names of the nobi-"lity," was paſted up at Paul's.

Thus King James began, and thus he continued his reign. That experience which he ſaid, in his firſt ſpeech to his parliament, would teach him not to be ſo eaſily and lightly moved in granting, taught him nothing. What a contraſt does this conduct make with the affability of Queen Elizabeth; with the œconomy and reſerve ſhe uſed, in diſpoſing of her treaſure, and in conferring honours? But King James ſtood in need of helps, to the want of which ſhe was ſuperior. "A good government (ſays "one of our beſt writers,) makes a good people." When a prince hath turned the ſpirit of a nation in his favour, he need not be ſolicitous about gaining particular men; but when he hath turned this ſpirit againſt him, he muſt employ all arts, even the

* Wilſon.

loweſt, to detach particular men from the body of the people, and to make them act by motives of private intereſt againſt the public ſenſe. This is faction; and therefore, whenever a court is induſtrious to ſeduce, to inveigle, to corrupt particular men, we may ſecurely conclude, without waiting for any other ſign, that ſuch an adminiſtration ſtands on a factious, not on a national bottom. But to return to King James.

Whilſt he neglected the affection, and ſought the reverence of the public, he loſt one, and was diſappointed of the other. His private and his public character both fell into contempt. Learning was the part upon which he valued himſelf. This he affected more than became a king, and broached, on every occaſion, in ſuch a manner as would have miſbecome a ſchoolmaſter. His pedantry was too much even for the age in which he lived. It would be tedious to quote the part he took in the conference at Hampton-court; and in the theological wrangles between the Gomariſts and Arminians; or to go about to prove, by ſome inſtances, what appeared in all his words and actions; what is univerſally allowed; and what the unkingly volume he left behind him teſtifies. Let us only obſerve, that the ridicule which aroſe from hence, and which fixed on him was juſt; becauſe the merit of a chief governor is wiſely to ſuperintend the whole, and not to ſhine in any inferior claſs; becauſe different, and, in ſome caſes perhaps, oppoſite talents, both natural and acquired, are neceſſary to move, and to regulate the movements of the machine of government; in ſhort, becauſe as a good adjutant may make

make a very bad general; ſo a great reader, and writer too, may be a very ignorant king.

There were many other circumſtances which concurred to leſſen this prince in the eyes of his ſubjects and of all mankind; as we ſhall have occaſion to obſerve frequently in the courſe of theſe remarks. In the mean time, we ſhall obſerve here that the ſtate he affected, and the pompous titles he was fond of, ſerved to render his puſillanimity (which with his vanity, made up the main of his character) more conſpicuous, and his perſon by conſequence more contemptible. The hoſtilities between the Engliſh and Spaniards continued, when Queen Elizabeth died. This great Queen, not content to have done herſelf and her ſubjects juſtice, on many ſignal occaſions, put it likewiſe into their power to do themſelves juſtice, by granting letters of repriſal on the ſubjects of Spain. King James was ſo fond of peace, that is, ſo afraid of war, that without ſtaying to be ſolicited on this head, or to be complimented on his acceſſion to the throne by the King of Spain, he revoked theſe letters in a few weeks after he came into England. He diſarmed his ſubjects, before he had provided for their better ſecurity. He ſtopt them in the courſe of doing themſelves juſtice, before he was ſure of obtaining reparation for their paſt loſſes. The impreſſions, which ſuch a proceeding muſt make on the minds of a trading people, are eaſily felt. He, who had revoked theſe letters in ſuch a manner, was not likely to grant them on any other occaſion. What protection therefore, and much leſs what encouragement to trade could be expected from a prince, who began his reign by ſacrificing this, the moſt valuable

luable intereſt of his people, to a foreign and hoſtile nation; to the mean arts of falſe policy, and even to his fears? Again; one of the firſt embaſſies, which King James ſent abroad, was that of the Earl of Hertford to Bruſſels. A Dutch man of war meeting the ſhip, which carried the ambaſſador, refuſed to ſtrike *; and having offered this affront to the united croſſes, which had never been offered to that of St. George, went off with impunity. It is ſaid that the ambaſſador hindered the captain

* N. B. This fact ſtands in hiſtory, as it is here related; but having looked into Sir William Monſon's naval tracts, we find it differently told. He ſays nothing of ſtriking, or not ſtriking the flag; but confeſſes that an affront was offered by two Dutch men of war. He adds, that he ſent for the captains on board his ſhip; that he threatened to right himſelf upon them; but that he diſmiſſed them at the entreaty of my Lord Hertford, on their excuſing themſelves, and promiſing to puniſh the offenders. How ſeverely the offenders were puniſhed may be collected from hence. "One "of theſe captains, ſays Sir William Monſon, was he, who ſince "that time committed a foul murder upon his Majeſty's ſubjects in "Ireland, that were under protection." If we had no other proofs of the indignities offered to our nation by the Dutch, from the time of the acceſſion of King James the firſt, than the memorials of this gentleman, they would be ſufficient. He complains of theſe indignities very much, and mentions ſeveral. In this very tract he affirms that the Hollanders took and burnt our ſhips, and murdered our men for trading to the ports of Flanders, whilſt they ſuffered their own countrymen, even in our ſight, to trade thither. The truth is, that our nation was inſulted with impunity, during this pacific reign, not only in Europe but in every other part of the world; not only by the Dutch, but by other nations; and that our government fell from the higheſt eſteem into the loweſt contempt. If therefore the inſtance we have quoted ſhould be diſputed, on the repreſentation of this fact by Sir William Monſon, an hundred others, and ſeveral of them more flagrant, might be produced.

from

from aſſerting the honour of the Britiſh flag. But two things are certain; one, that Queen Elizabeth would have ſeverely puniſhed her officer, and would have exacted ample reparation from the States General; the other, that King James did neither. This commonwealth had been raiſed by Queen Elizabeth, and was ſtill in want of the ſupport of England. The ſovereignty of her ſtate had not been yet acknowledged by any of the powers of Europe. How much the pacifick temper of King James was capable of bearing had not yet become ſo apparent, as he made it in the courſe of his reign. From all which it is eaſy to collect that if he had demanded ſatisfaction, he muſt and would have received it. But the good prince was afraid, where no fear was, and bore diſhonourably what he might have reſented ſafely; nay, what he ought to have reſented in any circumſtances, and at any hazard. We are not to wonder if ſo poor a conduct as this ſoon brought King James into contempt, mingled with indignation, amongſt a people, eagerly bent on commerce, and in whom high notions of honour and a gallant ſpirit had been infuſed, by the example of Queen Elizabeth, and encouraged during the whole courſe of a long reign.

Theſe things, and ſeveral others of the ſame kind, which I omit, might however have been borne. The ridicule might have appeared leſs in the eyes of men accuſtomed to it. The other faults might have been excuſed, or ſoftened at leaſt, by hopes of amendment. But there are ſome things behind, which no excuſe would alleviate, nor any patience endure. We ſhall now bring them forward, and

ſpeak

ſpeak of them under three heads. The pretenſions ſet up, and the attempts made againſt the freedom of this conſtitution. The management of parties. The conduct of our national intereſts abroad, againſt the ſenſe of the nation.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

A Fundamental principle, on which King James affected to eſtabliſh his authority, was that of an hereditary right to the crown. This ſacred right, according to the political creed which he impoſed, was not to be conteſted, much leſs to be ſet aſide; and yet this ſacred right was a mere chimera; contradicted by the general tenor of cuſtom from the Norman invaſion to his time; by the declared ſenſe of his immediate predeceſſors; by many ſolemn proceedings of parliament; and by the expreſs terms of law. Two families (for the race of Plantagenet was grafted on the Norman race, and they may be reckoned properly as one) had furniſhed, indeed, all our kings; but this conſtituted no hereditary right. When a prince of the royal family, but in a degree remote from the ſucceſſion, comes to the crown, in prejudice of the next heir, hereditary right is violated as really as it would be, if an abſolute ſtranger to this family ſucceeded. Such a prince may have another, and we think a better right; that, for inſtance, which is derived from a ſettlement of the crown, made by the authority of parliament; but to ſay he hath an hereditary right, is the groſſeſt abuſe of words imaginable. This we think ſo plain, that we ſhould be aſhamed to go about to prove it; and yet there are men, in this age of paradoxes, either dull enough, or proſtitute enough,

to

to aſſert hereditary right, even in the caſe above mentioned.

Our kings, of the Norman race, were ſo far from ſucceeding as next heirs to one another, and in a regular courſe of deſcent, that no inſtance can be produced of the next heir's ſucceeding, which is not preceded and followed by inſtances of the next heir's being ſet aſide. Thus Edward the firſt ſucceeded his father Henry the third; but his father Henry the third, and his grandfather John, had both been raiſed to the throne, in plain defiance of hereditary right; the right of Arthur, nephew to John, and the right of Arthur's ſiſter, couſin german to Henry. Edward the ſecond ſucceeded his father Edward the firſt; but Edward the third depoſed Edward the ſecond; the parliament renounced all allegiance to him; and Edward the third held the crown by a parliamentary title, as much as William the third. If we go up higher than this æra, or deſcend lower, we ſhall find the examples uniform. Examples, ſufficient to countenance this pretenſion of hereditary right to the crown of England, are to be found no where, but we haſten to King James; who raiſed, or, if you pleaſe, revived, this pretenſion, ſo needleſsly for himſelf, and ſo very unprofitably for his poſterity.

The Britiſh race began in Henry the ſeventh; and from him alone King James derived that right which he aſſerted in ſuch pompous terms; that undoubted right to the throne, as he called it in his firſt ſpeech to parliament, *which God by birth-right and lineal deſcent, had, in fulneſs of time, provided for him.* Now ſurely, if ever any Prince came to the crown without the leaſt colour of hereditary right, it

it was Henry the ſeventh. He had no pretence to it, even as heir of the houſe of Lancaſter. His wife might have ſome, as heir of the houſe of York; though her hereditary title was not free from objections, which the character of Edward the fourth rendered probable; but the title of his wife had no regard paid to it either by him or the parliament, in making this new ſettlement. He gained the crown by the good will of the people. He kept it by the confirmation of parliament, and by his own ability. The national union of the two roſes was a much better expedient for quiet than foundation of right. It took place in Henry the eighth; it was continued in his ſucceſſors; and the nation was willing it ſhould continue in King James and his family. But neither Henry the eighth, nor his ſon Edward the ſixth, who might have done ſo with much better grace, laid the ſame ſtreſs on hereditary right as King James did. One of them had recourſe to parliament on every occaſion, where the ſucceſſion to the crown was concerned; and the other made no ſcruple of giving the crown by will to his couſin, in prejudice of his ſiſter's right. This right however, ſuch as it was, prevailed; but the authority of parliament was called in aid by Mary, to remove the objection of illegitimacy, which lay againſt it. Elizabeth had ſo little concern about hereditary right, that ſhe neither held, nor deſired to hold her crown by any other tenure than the ſtatute of the 35th of her father's reign. In the 13th of her own reign, ſhe declared it by law high treaſon, during her life, and a premunire, after her deceaſe, to deny the power of parliament, in limiting and binding the deſcent and inheritance

of the crown, or the claims to it; and whatever private motives there were for putting to death Mary Queen of Scotland, her claiming a right, in oppoſition to an act of parliament, was the foundation of the public proceedings againſt her.

Such examples, as we have quoted, ought to have had ſome weight with King James. A prince, who had worn the crown of Scotland, under ſo many reſtraints, and in ſo great penury, might have contented himſelf, one would think, to hold that of England, whoſe penſioner he had been, by the ſame tenure, and to eſtabliſh his authority on the ſame principles, as had contented the beſt and greateſt of his predeceſſors; but his deſigns were as bad as thoſe of the very worſt princes, who went before him.

Happily for Great Britain, he wanted the capacity of Henry the ſeventh; the reſolution of Henry the eighth; and the favourable opportunities which they had the luck to find, or the art to contrive, of raiſing prerogative, acquiring wealth, and encroaching on liberty.

We obſerved in diſcourſing on the reign of Henry the ſeventh, that he had laid the foundations of an exorbitant power, before the nation was well aware of what he intended. King James, on the contrary, ſhewed his whole game from the firſt. Beſides the pleaſure, which his vanity found in boaſting of an abſolute, independent right to the crown, inherent in himſelf, he imagined that the tranſition would be eaſy, and ſo indeed it proved amongſt many, from this to ſome other uſeful apothegms. He hoped to get, and he did get, an act of recognition of his right of ſucceſſion; for we can-

cannot perſuade ourſelves, with Rapin, that he was indifferent on this point; and though this act, as well as the oath of ſupremacy, which had been eſtabliſhed long before, and that of allegiance, which was eſtabliſhed ſoon after, is in itſelf, as it hath proved in effect, but a feeble prop to ſupport the pretence of hereditary right; yet King James certainly looked on it as an admiſſion of his claim, and meant a real advantage, where the parliament very probably meant nothing more than a compliment. This prince brought with him the true ſpirit of miſſionary; and, by preaching a new doctrine, endeavoured to eſtabliſh a new power. From the notion of independent right was deduced the notion of independent authority; a right ſuperior to law; an authority unbounded by it; a right which could not be proved; an authority which might not be defined. The inference from both theſe was obvious. This independent king muſt be accountable to God alone. He could not be accountable to man.

If this excellent ſyſtem of policy could have been generally impoſed, his ſacred Majeſty might have battened, with great eaſe and delight, in the full ſunſhine of arbitrary power; and that he ſhould ſucceed in impoſing it, his own vanity and the ſervile flattery of his miniſters had made him to expect. True it is, that the language he held was not ſo plain, nor the efforts he made ſo direct and violent, in the beginning of his reign, as they grew ſoon afterwards; but yet, if we conſider the multitude of his proclamations; the nature of ſome; the ſtile of all; the obedience he exacted to them; the acts of power which he exerciſed; thoſe which he eſſayed; and many other particulars of his conduct, which

for brevity we omit; we muſt of courſe conclude that he thought himſelf ſure, at that time, of laying the foundations, ſince he prepared to erect ſo great a ſuperſtructure. He was deceived. Inſtead of making his impoſitions paſs on the people, he only awakened their jealouſy. He had, in his own age, and he hath in ours, the demerit of beginning a ſtruggle between prerogative and privilege; and of eſtabliſhing a ſort of warfare between the prince and the people. But the ſpirit of liberty baffled all his deſigns. The ſpirit of liberty was not enervated by luxury in thoſe days. It was not only alive, but vigorous and active. It roſe in the nation as that of faction roſe at court. The ſame principle, which complied with Queen Elizabeth, reſiſted King James. The oppoſition began as ſoon as the invaſion; and tyranny was, at leaſt, nipt in the bud.

King James made one attempt, indeed, in the beginning of his reign, which bid fairer for ſucceſs than any of thoſe which he made afterwards; and which, if it had ſucceeded, would have done the great work of his reign, by means more ſilent and more dangerous; more ſoft in appearance, and more deadly in effect. We mean the attempt he made on the privileges of the houſe of commons, in the caſe of elections. In the proclamation for calling his firſt parliament, he aſſumed a new and unjuſtifiable prerogative, by his manner of preſcribing to the electors, and to the elected; and by ſubjecting both to ſevere penalties, if they failed, not only againſt the laws and ſtatutes, but againſt the purport, effect, and true meaning of his proclamation. In the courſe of the ſeſſion, he endeavoured to put this preroga-

rogative in execution, by inſiſting firſt, that the commons ſhould confer with the lords; and when this was refuſed, that they ſhould confer with judges on the merits of an election and return for the county of Buckingham, which they had already heard and decided. If the King had prevailed in this attempt of garbling the houſe of commons, he would have prevailed, very probably, in that which he made ſome time afterwards, of impriſoning and puniſhing the members of it. Thus he might have intimidated thoſe by one prerogative, whom he could not exclude by the other. Such an influence as muſt have reſulted from hence, joined to that which the executive power gives unavoidably to every king, would ſoon have rendered the houſe of commons as dependent upon him, as the houſe of lords at that time appeared to be; for, if money gets money, (which will not, we ſuppoſe, be denied in this ſtock-jobbing age), it is no leſs true, and perhaps no leſs viſible, that influence begets influence. Now we apprehend, that in this caſe, the barrier of liberty had been totally deſtroyed, and that King James would have virtually been in poſſeſſion of arbitrary power; for whether the will of the prince becomes a law, by force of prerogative and independently of parliament; or whether it is made ſo upon every occaſion, by the concurrence of parliament; arbitrary power is alike eſtabliſhed. The only difference lies here. Every degree of this power, which is obtained without parliament, is obtained againſt the forms, as well as againſt the ſpirit of the conſtitution; and muſt therefore be obtained with difficulty, and poſſeſſed with danger. Whereas, in the other method of obtaining and exerciſing this power, by and with parliament, if it can be obtained at all, the progreſs is ea-

ſy and ſhort; and the poſſeſſion of it is ſo far from being dangerous, that liberty is diſarmed, as well as oppreſſed, by this method; that part of the conſtitution, which was inſtituted to oppoſe the encroachments of the crown, the mal adminiſtration of men in power, and every other grievance, being influenced to abet theſe encroachments, to ſupport this mal-adminiſtration, and even to concur in impoſing the grievances. National concurrence can be acquired only by a good prince, and for good purpoſes; becauſe public good alone can be a national motive. But King James was not ignorant that private good may be rendered a ſuperior motive to particular men, and that it is morally poſſible to make even parliaments ſubſervient to the worſt purpoſes of a court. Richard the ſecond, by influencing the elections, and Queen Mary, by corrupting the members, had created ſuch a dependence of the parliament on the court, that the firſt had well nigh eſtabliſhed, in ſpight of all other oppoſition, his abſolute power; and that the latter was able to ſubvert what her father and her brother had done; to govern with the utmoſt cruelty; and to ſacrifice the intereſts of the nation to thoſe of an huſband, whom ſhe took againſt the general inclination of her people. If therefore King James could have created the ſame dependence, he might have promiſed himſelf the ſame ſucceſs. He might have governed in great quiet and ſafety, with the concurrence of parliament, tyrannically at home and ignominiouſly abroad. He might have beggared the nation, as he beggared himſelf, and have given an abſolute dominion over both, to one inſolent and incapable miniſter. But this concurrence could not be obtained; becauſe

becauſe the dependence of parliaments upon the King could not be created. By aſſerting their privileges, they prevented any direct and open influence of the crown. Had King James been rich, (and it was in his power to have been ſo,) had luxury, and the offspring of luxury, corruption, both which he introduced, prevailed in the body of the people, an indirect and private influence might have been eſtabliſhed; this nation might have been enſlaved, by the leaſt beloved, and the moſt deſpiſed of all her kings. But the King continued poor, and the nation honeſt; this indirect and private influence was either not attempted, or attempted without effect; and we are perſuaded, that no advocate for it could have been found, even in this reign or the next. There were men wicked enough to aſcribe ſuch powers to the king, as would have deſtroyed effectually the powers of parliament; but there was no man abſurd, as well as wicked enough, to allow theſe powers, which are given to parliament by the conſtitution, and to argue for an expedient which muſt of courſe render them ineffectual, or pervert them to purpoſes oppoſite to thoſe for which they were inſtituted. Thus liberty was preſerved, by preſerving the independency of parliaments. The proceedings of the commons, in the whole courſe of the affair we have mentioned, were extremely moderate. They went farther, not only in expreſſions and outward demonſtrations of reſpect and ſubmiſſion, but in real compliances, than could have been expected, or than was perhaps ſtrictly right; and when an expedient was fallen upon to draw the king, with ſome reputation, out of the conteſt, they gave way to it, although by admitting a writ for

for the election of a member, in the room of one whose election they had allowed, they suffered a precedent to be established which might be turned against them. But the spirit of liberty, though easily alarmed, is slow to resent even great provocations, and to act with violence, even against the worst princes. Repeated injuries, imminent and extreme danger, can alone bring things to such a pass; and no king of this nation was ever distressed by his people, without receiving frequent warnings, as well as accumulating insupportable grievances. King James felt some part of this distress in process of time. He deserved it perhaps already. The commons however contented themselves, in an address to him, to assert their privileges, and to complain of this invasion of them, amongst other grievances. The proceedings of parliament were carried on, in subsequent sessions, with the same moderation and temper. In that which followed the discovery of the gunpowder treason, the oath of allegiance was imposed; and this pledge of fidelity for the future, was the sole hardship, (for such the court of Rome, and a great number of that communion, esteemed it,) which the Roman catholic party drew on themselves by so execrable an attempt. The parliament complied on this occasion with the king, probably against their own sentiments, since nothing could be more different than his notions and theirs, concerning the conduct to be held with papists, and even concerning popery itself; and since the favours he shewed, not to say the court he made, to this party, had already created great uneasiness, and began to be a most unpopular part of his government. He had no war on his hands,

and

and his revenues were at leaſt as conſiderable as thoſe of the late Queen. The commons, however, gave him one of the greateſt ſupplies which had ever been given in parliament; and upon this occaſion it may not be improper to obſerve, in confirmation of what we have advanced already, that the natural bent of the people, to live well with their kings, is ſo ſtrong, that parliaments under no other influence than this, will neglect nothing to gain them; nay, that a prince like King James, diſliked, diſtruſted, deſpiſed, may prevail on his parliament for a time, and, till all hopes of gaining him are loſt, to do as well as bear in his favour, what would not be attempted in a better reign, nor ſucceed perhaps, if it was attempted.

His deſign of uniting the two kingdoms of England and Scotland failed. It was too great an undertaking for ſo bad a workman. We muſt think that the general arguments againſt it were grounded on prejudice; on falſe and narrow notions. But there were other reaſons, drawn from the jealouſies of that time, and from the conduct of the King, who had beforehand declared all the *poſt nati*, or perſons born ſince his acceſſion to the Engliſh throne, naturalized in the two kingdoms; and theſe were, without doubt, the true reaſons which prevailed againſt the union. The next time the parliament aſſembled, to proceed on buſineſs, was in the year 1610, and by that time the general diſcontent of the nation began to ſhew itſelf, in loud and univerſal murmurs. Some monopolies, the rigid and impolitic proceedings of the high-commiſſion court and ſtar chamber, and many other cauſes, combined

to

to raiſe them. But no particular grievance either had, or deſerved to have, ſo great an affect as the continual endeavours which were uſed, to eſtabliſh practices and principles, abſolutely deſtructive of the general conſtitution of the Engliſh government. Such was the attempt made by Bancroft, rhbiſhop of Canterbury, when he preſented the twenty-five articles, commonly called *Articuli cleri*, and petitioned the King to grant prohibitions upon them. Such again were the books publiſhed by Cowel and Blackwood, aſſerting that the King is neither bound by the laws, nor by his coronation oath; that he hath a right to make laws and impoſe taxes, without the conſent of parliament, and that the nation was reduced to a ſtate of ſlavery by the Norman conqueſt. Such, to conclude this head, were the many acts which the King himſelf had done, and the many declarations which he had made; nay, ſuch was the declaration he made in this very parliament, when he affirmed, that although "all kings, who "are not tyrants, or perjured, will bound themſelves within the limits of their laws; yet as it is "blaſphemy to diſpute what God may do, ſo it is "ſedition in ſubjects to diſpute what a king may do "in the height of his power." Theſe doctrines were new, ungrateful, and ſhocking to Engliſh ears; yet the parliament kept in temper, and bore ſuch language from this fearful, bullying prince, as the fierceſt of his predeceſſors, ſince Richard the ſecond, had never preſumed to hold. They took no notice of Bancroft, nor purſued any farther meaſures againſt Cowel and Blackwood, after theſe libels had been called in by proclamation, and the reading

reading of them had been forbid. Nay, there was a ſubſidy granted in this very ſeſſion, with as little pretence as there had been for granting the former. All this temper, ſubmiſſion, and generoſity of the parliament were loſt on the King. They would not connive at grievances, nor ſacrifice liberty; and thoſe were the only terms upon which an union with him was to be obtained. From the year 1610, to 1614, he held no parliament; and it is evident that he would never have called another, if his miniſters could have ſupplied his profuſion, by all the illegal and oppreſſive means which they uſed to raiſe money on the people, and which we forbear to enumerate, becauſe the moſt partial writers, who have endeavoured to excuſe them, have not preſumed to deny them. Even under this neceſſity, he did not take the reſolution of calling a new parliament, till he was prevailed on by his favourite. Somerſet, who had formed a ſcheme for influencing the elections, and, at the head of ſeveral other undertakers, flattered himſelf and his maſter, that he could get ſuch members choſen *, "as ſhould com-"ply ſolely to the King's deſires." But this project proved abortive. "The Engliſh freedom can-"not be loſt," (ſays Wilſon; and may his ſaying prove true to all future generations!) "by a few "baſe and tame ſpirits, that would unmake them-"ſelves and their poſterity, to aggrandize one man." It happened to King James, as it happened to his ſon. Diſgrace at court proved a recommendation in the country; and the faces which appeared in

* Wilſon.

this

this new parliament, made the countenance of the court to droop.

From this time began that conduct, on the part of the court, and on the part of the parliament, which continued to be held with very fatal uniformity, till it ended in a civil war. That the people had reaſon to be jealous of the deſigns of the court, hath appeared, and will appear ſtill more flagrantly in the ſequel; but that the court had, at this time, nay even in the month of May 1640, when King Charles diſſolved the laſt parliament he had it in his power to diſſolve, any reaſon to be jealous of the parliament, or the people, we deny; and are able to juſtify our denial by fact and authority; even the authority of my Lord Clarendon. But the father and the ſon, and eſpecially the former, having no end in calling their parliaments but to get money from their people, and to evade, rather than refuſe, the redreſs of grievances; the art of the court was conſtantly employed, under pretence of the urgency of affairs, and in the parliament of 1614, without any pretence at all, to get the ſubſidies firſt diſpatched. The commons, on the other ſide, who knew for what they were called together, and who expected that little time would be allowed them to inquire into mal adminiſtration, and to repreſent grievances, when they had once given the money, inſiſted for the moſt part, (for there happened occaſions in which they did not inſiſt,) that the conſideration of grievances ſhould precede, or at leaſt go an equal pace with that of the ſupply. This was the rock on which ſo many parliaments ſplit. This alone occaſioned the diſſolution of that

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we are ſpeaking of, and made King James reſolve, though he could not ſupport his reſolution to the end of his reign, to govern by his prerogative alone, and without the aſſiſtance of his parliament; that is, to avow abſolute power.

LETTER XXI.

IN our laſt diſcourſe, concerning the pretenſions ſet up, and the attempts made by King James againſt the freedom of the Engliſh conſtitution, we carried theſe remarks down to the year 1614. We choſe to ſtop there, becauſe it ſeems to be the very diametrical point of oppoſition, or a point very near to that, between the government of this Prince and the government of Queen Elizabeth, which we ſo largely inſiſted upon. The diſtruſt between him and his people was now entirely formed. His offenſive and their defenſive pretenſions were now fully explained. An union of affection between him and his people, which the latter ſtill deſired, and had long courted, was now grown deſperate. An union, unworthy of a free people, a factious union between the parliament and the court, founded in the dependence and ſubmiſſion of the former, and ſo much affected by the latter, was after many trials become evidently impracticable. The King, as he had managed affairs, could neither govern with parliament, nor without it; and thoſe powers, which are deſigned to be mutual helps, were turned to be mutual clogs on one another; not by any deviation on the ſide of the people, or of their repreſentatives, from the true line of government; but by a manifeſt and almoſt continual deviation from it, on the ſide of the crown.

Thus were thoſe great diſorders in government, and

and that national confuſion raiſed, which in a few years more deſtroyed the whole conſtitution. In ſhort, that melancholy ſcene, which had been preparing ever ſince the acceſſion of King James, was opened about this time, and continued open with few variations, every one of which was for the worſe, till that tragedy began, wherein the nobleſt as well as the meaneſt blood in the nation was ſhed ſo profuſely, and with the beginning of which we propoſe to conclude theſe remarks.

We have charged the whole, and we think very juſtly, to the account of King James; who attempted to govern England by foreign, not by Engliſh maxims; nay, by ſuch as he was unable to govern his own country. Sure we are, that no part of it can be laid to the conſtitution, or people of England. The conſtitution was the ſame in his time as in the time of Queen Elizabeth; and the people claimed, under him, no other privileges, nor powers, than they had enjoyed under her. It was his fault, not theirs, if by trading in the ſame path, which had kept them united with her, they were divided from him. Theſe are points, on which we think it proper to inſiſt a little more in this place, in order to caſt a greater light on the particulars which follow, and to avoid any prolix repetitions, when we come to wind up the whole.

King James had opened the parliament, which met in 1614, by aſking money for the portion and other expences of his daughter's marriage to the Elector Palatine, and promiſed the commons leave and leiſure to enquire into grievances, when they had complied with his demand; but diſtruſt, the bane of all harmony, prevailed amongſt them, as it

is plain even from this conditional promiſe that it prevailed with him, and they reſolved to begin the work of the ſeſſion by a repreſentation of grievances.

A principal article in this roll was the growth of Popery, encouraged no doubt by ſeveral paſſages in the conduct of King James, and particularly by two; his employing not only ſuſpected, but known Roman-catholics in offices of the higheſt truſt and conſequence; and his avowed deſign of marrying his ſon to ſome princeſs of that religion. Shall we ſay, in the ſtile of King James, that it was preſumption in the commons to meddle in ſuch deep matters of ſtate? Shall we not rather think it was preſumption in the Prince to determine a matter, of this importance to the public welfare, to the preſent and to future generations, without the advice, nay againſt the opinion of the great council of the nation? Shall we not rather applaud the wiſdom and foreſight, as well as the virtue of thoſe men, who diſcovered the fruit in the ſeed; whoſe minds foreboded all the miſchievous conſequences of ſuch an alliance, and who did their utmoſt to prevent the true original cauſe of our greateſt misfortunes?

Under another head of grievances, complained of at this time, were the monopolies, and many illegal exactions of money from the people. The parliament had the more reaſon to loſe no time, and to ſpare no endeavours in putting a ſtop to theſe encroachments on liberty, becauſe the longer they laſted, the more familiar they grew. The court improved in the practice of them. The people, who ſubmitted to them by force, might have been brought to ſubmit to them by cuſtom, and the King might become able in time to ſupply his wants without the

aſſiſtance

aſſiſtance of parliament; a caſe almoſt as deſperate as that of his being able to ſupply them when, in what manner, and in what proportions he thought fit, by the aſſiſtance of parliament. We ſay almoſt as deſperate, on the principles touched in our laſt letter; for, in the firſt place, if King James could have ſupplied his wants without parliaments, he would certainly have called none, and the condition of this nation had been worſe than that of Spain, of France, and of other nations, whoſe examples have been, abſurdly enough, quoted to juſtify theſe arbitary methods of raiſing money, and to induce mankind to ſubmit to them. In France, for inſtance, the people muſt ſuffer; but they may complain. Their mouths are open, that is, their parliaments may repreſent; and even remonſtrate; nay, they have gone ſo far, as to refuſe with ſucceſs to regiſter and give the neceſſary forms of a law to an edict of the Prince, which they judged oppreſſive to the people. But if King James had prevailed, he would have governed without even theſe ſhadows of a parliament. The people muſt have ſuffered, and could not have complained. Their ſole mouth, the mouth of parliament, would have been ſtopped, and redreſs of grievances being no longer attainable by the applications of their repreſentative body, which would have no longer exiſted, they muſt have ſubmitted tamely and ſilently, or have ſought a remedy in their collective body, which can only act by reſiſtence and force. This ſituation would have been bad enough, God knows; yet not ſo bad as the other; for, in the ſecond place, if the parliament had been made dependent on the crown, (no matter by what kind of influence; whether by

the diſtribution of honours, the tranſlation of biſhops, the corrupting the electors and the elected, or the other methods King James took), the mouth of the people had not been ſtopped indeed; but it had been formed to ſpeak another language than that of the heart. The people muſt have ſuffered, and the parliament muſt have rejoiced. If they had felt an increaſing load of debt, the parliament muſt have teſtified great ſatisfaction at the diminution of it. If they had felt the decay of trade, and the growth of national poverty, the parliament muſt have boaſted of the wealth and flouriſhing ſtate of the kingdom. If they had ſeen the intereſt and honour of the nation, as they ſaw it too often, neglected or ſacrificed, the parliament muſt have exulted in the triumphs of both. In ſhort, ſuch a depending parliament muſt not only have connived at the grievances of their country, but have ſanctified them too. They muſt not only have borne the rod, but have kiſſed it too; not only the rod of their Prince, but the rod of ſome upſtart miniſter, who owed his elevation to his diſhonour, and his favour to his ſhame. But as the integrity of parliament ſecured the nation from any danger of this kind; ſo the neceſſities of the King were the great ſecurity againſt any danger of the other. Was the parliament therefore to blame, who oppoſed ſtrenuouſly every innovation ſet on foot, to leſſen this ſecurity?

A third grievance, which the parliament deſired to have redreſſed, was that incredible waſte, which King James made of the revenues of the crown. Theſe revenues were, at that time, ſo much more than ſufficient for all the ordinary occaſions of the govern-

government, that Queen Elizabeth, who had ſo many extraordinary occaſions of expence, who paid ſo many old debts, without contracting new, and achieved ſuch glorious enterprizes abroad, as well as at home, did not receive in grants from her people above * four millions in more than forty years. If King James, who had no extraordinary occaſions of expence, who paid no debts, who achieved no glorious enterprizes any where, had neither aſked money, nor raiſed it without aſking, the ſquandering his revenue had not probably come under debate in parliament; but, ſince he expected that the people ſhould provide for his debts, and ſupply his neceſſities, it was juſt that the repreſentatives of the people ſhould examine how they were contracted. The immenſe eſtates, which were made in theſe days at court, the known corruption not only of inferior agents, but of principal miniſters, and even of thoſe, who were at the head of the treaſury, made ſuch an examination the more neceſſary, and provoked and excited the more to it. The houſe of commons would have thought that they had betrayed their truſt, if they had neglected ſo important a part of it. By the proceedings, as well as declarations of the parliaments, in theſe times, it is plain that they thought they had not an arbitrary, but only a conditional power over the purſe of the nation, though the ſtrings of it were in their hands;

* We do not want to be told that the value of money was very different at that time from what it is now; but though we admit of the higheſt calculations, this ſum will appear ſurpriſingly ſmall for ſo many years, when compared with the profuſion and extravagance of ſome later reigns.

that

that they were to tax the people in no greater proportion than was ſtrictly neceſſary to ſupport the honour and intereſt of the nation, and the dignity of the crown; that they could make no judgment, concerning this proportion, if they had not a full communication of the nature of the ſervice; for which extraordinary aids were demanded; and if they did not examine, before they granted theſe aids, how the ordinary revenues and any precedent, extraordinary grants had been applied. Such maxims as theſe will not be condemned, we preſume. They have been always profeſſed and and frequently purſued, from the time we ſpeak of down to the age in which we live. Since the reign of King William the third, our princes have indeed ſtood on a different foot. They have had a diſtinct revenue aſſigned to them for their particular uſe. The annual expences and the debts of the nation have been ſeparately provided for by parliament; and yet not only the management and application of theſe annual grants, out alſo the immenſe property of the creditors of the public have been left to the crown, as the management and application of thoſe revenues were, which belonged properly to the crown, and by deficiencies, on which the crown, not the nation, was immediately affected. It is no wonder therefore if our parliaments have thought themſelves obliged, ſince this great alteration, ſometimes by committees, and ſometimes by extraordinary commiſſions, to inſpect more narrowly into revenues, which are ſtill managed by the officers of the crown, though they make no longer any part of the eſtate of the crown; and we perſuade ourſelves that no honeſt man would be ſorry, if the

wiſdom

wiſdom of our preſent repreſentatives ſhould think fit to make any inquiſitions of the ſame nature; but even before this alteration, before the ſettlement of a civil liſt, and when our princes ſtood on the ſame foot as King James the firſt, with reſpect to their private and public revenue, the maxims we ſpeak of were purſued on many occaſions, and always with univerſal applauſe of the people. In the reign of King Charles the ſecond, for inſtance, our whig-patriots endeavoured not only to detect and puniſh frauds and abuſes, by enquiries into the management of the public money, but to prevent them likewiſe, by appropriating what they gave to the uſes, for which it was given; and thus much we think may ſuffice, to clear the conduct of the parliament of 1614 from any imputations on this head.

Let us mention, in this place, one grievance more which we have touched upon in another. A former parliament had taken ſome notice of it, and this parliament would probably have taken more, if the King had allowed them time. The doctrines, which eſtabliſhed the unbounded and ineffable prerogative of the king; which reduced the privileges of parliament to be no longer an antient and undoubted right and inheritance, but derived them from the permiſſion and toleration of the crown, and declared them liable to be retrenched at the will of the prince; and which, by neceſſary conſequence, changed at once the nature of the Engliſh conſtitution, from that of a free to that of an arbitrary government; all theſe doctrines, we ſay, or the principles on which they were eſtabliſhed, had been already publicly and frequently aſſerted by King James. They were the language of the court; and

a party had been formed in the nation, who made profeſſion of them. They were maintained in converſation. They were pleaded for in print; and they became ſoon afterwards the diſgrace and profanation of the pulpit.

We have ſometimes compared in our thoughts, theſe uſurpations of King James over the privileges of his people to thoſe of the Popes, which gave that prince ſo much offence, over the rights of the emperors and indeed over the civil rights of mankind. Charlemagne had made theſe prieſts princes. They continued for about two hundred and ſixty years, to ſubmit, in the main, to thoſe rules, which the imperial conſtitutions and eccleſiaſtical cuſtoms had eſtabliſhed; after which they ſtarted, at once, out of theſe bounds. They would be limited pontiffs, no longer, but arbitrary high prieſts, like the Dairo of Japan, ſomething more than human, and civil as well as eccleſiaſtical tyrants. They ſcorned to go to tyranny by degrees, but carried their uſurpations at one leap to the utmoſt pitch of extravagance. Alexander the ſecond denied the right of the emperors to chuſe, or to confirm the election of a Pope. His ſucceſſor took the inveſtitures from them. Henry the fourth aſſerted the imperial rights, in oppoſition to this invaſion; but Gregory the ſeventh aſſerted, in oppoſition to him, that Rome was the capital of the world; that the Pope was independent of all powers on earth; that kings and emperors were liable to be depoſed by the plenitude of his authority. The Pope was believed by many on his word; and there were more, who found their private account in ſeeming to believe him. Factions were raiſed to maintain theſe principles.

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They were conſecrated by the church. They prevailed in thoſe days. More than five centuries were not ſufficient to aboliſh the practice, and more than ſix have not been ſufficient to extirpate the principle. True it is, that theſe popes had ſeveral advantages, which King James had not; and, amongſt others, the minority of Henry the fourth at the time, when they began this monſtruous uſurpation; whereas when King James ſet up his pretenſions, and talked and writ of prerogative, in terms as ridiculous and full of as much bombaſt as thoſe, which the briefs and other public acts of Hildebrand contained, the commons of England were grown up to a full maturity of property and power. Shall we condemn them for endeavouring to preſerve the principles of liberty, that they might preſerve the ſpirit of it, and by preſerving the ſpirit, deſerve and ſecure the continuance of ſo great a bleſſing? Should an Engliſh parliament have ſat quiet and ſilent, in humble dependence on the prince, whilſt ſlavery, in ſpeculation as well as practice, was making ſuch large advances; whilſt the laws of the land, the laws of nature, and thoſe of God himſelf were perverted to impoſe a yoke of baſe and ſervile prejudices on the underſtandings and conſciences of mankind? We think not. Sure we are that our parliaments have been always watchful to cenſure and explode, in time, ſuch doctrines as might, even by induction and conſequence, weaken the foundation of liberty. The inſtances of this kind are ſo well known, and ſome of them ſo recent, that we need not quote them. But, in order to juſtify ſtill farther the ſenſe and conduct of our forefathers, let us appeal even to the preſent ſenſe of mankind.

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We all know that there are mercenary and abandoned wretches amongſt us, who have dared to plead for a dependence of the parliament on the crown; not for that dependence of the ſeveral parts of the government on one another, which our conſtitution hath formed, and on the preſervation of which the freedom of our government intirely reſts; but for the moſt indirect, the moſt iniquitous, as well as dangerous dependence imaginable; for a dependence to be created by corruption, which muſt always produce effects as infamous as its cauſe. Corruption, we ſay, hath been defended, nay, recommended (for we will repeat the aſſertion) as a neceſſary expedient of government. The repreſentation of the country by the independent gentlemen of the country hath been ſaucily and awkwardly ridiculed; as if a bill to prevent all perſons, who have neither places nor penſions, from ſitting in parliament was proper to be paſſed, and thoſe ſalutary laws, which are in force for preventing perſons, who have places and penſions, from ſitting there were as proper to be repealed. Nay, theſe incendiaries, who go about to deſtroy our conſtitution, have not bluſhed in the ſame breath to admit that ſtanding armies have been generally the inſtruments of overturning free governments, and to affirm that a ſtanding army is neceſſary to be kept up in ours; if you aſk them againſt whom, they anſwer you very frankly, againſt the people; if you aſk them why, they anſwer you with the ſame frankneſs, becauſe of the levity and inconſtancy of the people. This is the evil; an army is the remedy. Our army is not deſigned, according to theſe doctors of ſlavery, againſt the enemies of the nation, but againſt

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the nation. We are confident that the preſent army is incapable of being employed to ſuch purpoſes, and abhors an imputation, which might have been juſtly caſt on Cromwell's army, but is very unjuſtly inſinuated againſt the preſent.

Now, let us ſuppoſe that the time was come, when the parliament ſhould think fit to cenſure and put a ſtop to the influence of ſuch writings as theſe; would any honeſt man, if he laid his hand upon his heart, diſapprove their proceedings? On the contrary, would not every man who wiſhed that the conſtitution of this government might be preſerved, applaud ſuch meaſures, and bleſs the repreſentatives of his country for their zeal againſt the betrayers of it?

Upon the whole matter, we think it very plain, that the alarm which was taken at the propagation of theſe infamous doctrines, in the reign of King James the firſt, is abundantly juſtified not only by the examples of other parliaments, but by the general ſenſe of mankind in all ages.

Whenever the fundamentals of a free government are attacked, or any other ſchemes, ruinous to the general intereſt of a nation, are purſued; the beſt ſervice that can be done to ſuch a nation, and even to the prince, is to commence an early and vigorous oppoſition to them; for the event will always ſhew, as we ſhall ſoon ſee in the preſent caſe, that thoſe who form an oppoſition in this manner, are the trueſt friends to both, however they may be ſtigmatized at firſt with odious names, which belong more properly to thoſe who throw the dirt at them.

If the oppoſition begin late, or be carried on more faintly than the exigency requires, the evil will grow; nay it will grow the more by ſuch an oppoſition, till it becomes at length too inveterate for the ordinary methods of cure; and whenever that happens, whenever uſurpations on national liberty are grown too ſtrong to be checked by theſe ordinary methods, the people are reduced to this alternative. They muſt either ſubmit to ſlavery and beggary, the worſt of all political evils; or they muſt endeavour to prevent the impending miſchief by open force and reſiſtance, which is an evil but one degree leſs eligible than the other. But when the oppoſition is begun early, and carried on vigorouſly, there is time to obtain redreſs of grievances, and put a ſtop to ſuch uſurpations by thoſe gentle and ſafe methods which their conſtitution hath provided; methods which may and have often proved fatal to wicked miniſters, but can never prove fatal to the prince himſelf. He is never in danger but when theſe methods, which all arbitrary courts diſlike, are too long delayed.

The moſt plauſible objection to ſuch proceedings, and by which well-meaning men are frequently made the bubbles of thoſe who have the worſt deſigns, ariſes from a falſe notion of moderation. True political moderation conſiſts in not oppoſing the meaſures of government, except when great and national intereſts are at ſtake; and when that is the caſe, in oppoſing them with ſuch a degree of warmth, as is adequate to the nature of the evil, to the circumſtances of danger attending it, and even to thoſe of opportunity. To oppoſe upon any other foot; to oppoſe things which are not blame-worthy, or which

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are of no material conſequence to the national intereſt, with ſuch violence as may diſorder the harmony of government, is certainly faction; but it is likewiſe faction, and faction of the worſt kind, either not to oppoſe at all, or not to oppoſe in earneſt, when points of the greateſt importance to the nation are concerned.

The truth of all this reaſoning will be confirmed by what remains to be ſaid of King James and King Charles the firſt. If there had not been an early and honeſt oppoſition, in defence of national liberty, againſt King James, his reign would have ſufficed to eſtabliſh him in the ſeat of arbitrary power. If the oppoſition had been more generally backed with the weight of the nation in due time; if the court had not been able to divide men againſt their general intereſt, upon principles of prerogative and liberty, King James muſt have compiled in time; the conſtitution would have been reſettled on its right foundation; his family would have been preſerved, all our national calamities would have been prevented, and the ſins of the court might have been expiated by the puniſhment of one or two of the miniſters. But a prerogative party having been nurſed up from the beginning, and gained ſtrength in the whole courſe of King James's reign, the ſtrength of the nation was divided, and the conteſt continued ſo long between the king and the people, that reſentment, and paſſion, and prejudices, and faction, took place on all ſides. The ſoft and gentle methods of cure, which our conſtitution had provided, became impracticable. A provoked people ſought their remedy in reſiſtance. A civil war followed. The Engliſh government was ſubverted, inſtead of being reformed.

What hath been ſaid will ſerve to juſtify the conduct of the parliament, as well as the general alarm which the nation had taken in 1614. Theſe were the crimes, the heinous, unpardonable crimes, for which King James diſſolved this parliament with ſo much indignation, after they had ſat but a few weeks, and had not time given them to paſs even one law. Theſe were the crimes for which he confined to the Tower and other priſons, and puniſhed in other ways, ſo many of the moſt active members. Laſtly, theſe were the crimes which made him reſolve what he had before attempted, to govern without parliament. The particular conſequences of theſe meaſures will appear in our next letter, when we come to conſider his conduct of our national intereſts abroad, againſt the ſenſe of the nation; in which period of time the foreign affairs are ſo intermixed with parliamentary and domeſtic affairs, that we ſhall not divide them, but ſpeak of them together, having firſt very briefly made our obſervations on his management of parties.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

IN Letter XVIII. we have ſpoken of the ſtate of parties at the acceſſion of King James. We are now to make our obſervations on his management of them. It is neceſſary we ſhould do this in order to give a compleat and and juſt idea of his government; and yet ſo much hath been ſaid on the ſubject by writers of all denominations, and even by ourſelves, that there remains but very little to be added, either for curioſity or inſtruction.

We might obſerve how he drew himſelf into ſome trouble, if not danger, and expoſed himſelf to the neceſſity of ſhedding ſome blood, in the very firſt months of his reign, by eſpouſing the paſſions of a party; by diſgracing and proſcribing men who had no crime at that time towards him but their attachment to the late Queen; by avowing the cauſe of the Earl of Eſſex, whoſe deſigns had been, no doubt as treaſonable at leaſt, and as chimerical too, as thoſe into which he drove Grey, Cobham and Raleigh, or which were imputed to them.

Several other anecdotes, concerning factions at court and parties in the nation, might be collected and remarked upon. But we ſhall paſs them over, and confine ourſelves to obſerve, in a very few inſtances, how he adapted his particular management of parties, to the general and main deſign of his policy, what ſtrength he acquired, what ſtrength he

loſt by his conduct, and what conteſts he entailed on poſterity.

There were no parties at this time in the nation, but ſuch as were formed on religious differences; and it had been a great object of the policy of Queen Elizabeth, to keep all parties within thoſe bounds. We know the maxims on which ſhe proceeded, by a letter of Sir Francis Walſingham, writ expreſsly on this ſubject. "She thought that conſciences were not to be forced, but won and reduced by truth, time, inſtruction, and perſuaſion; and that cauſes of conſcience loſe their nature, when they exceed their bounds, and grow matter of faction." By keeping theſe maxims ſhe ſucceeded. The parties in the church made none in the ſtate. They were obliged to live in due ſubjection to laws, wiſely made and moderately exerciſed. They were never puniſhed whilſt they continued in this ſubjection, much leſs were they provoked or encouraged to go out of it. The powers of the church were applied to the ſupport of the eſtabliſhment, not rendered ſubſervient to any factious deſigns of the court; and eccleſiaſtical violence was reſtrained from confirming the obſtinacy of thoſe who diſſented, by perſecution of them, or from increaſing their numbers by perſecution of others.

Directly oppoſite to this conduct was that of King James. In haſte to ſhew his parts, he had a conference between the biſhops and the puritan miniſters at Hampton-court, in a few months after his acceſſion; where he made himſelf a principal party in the diſpute. His courtiers flattered him, and archbiſhop Whitgift, who died ſoon afterwards, and probably doated then, declared himſelf verily perſuaded,

ſuaded, that the King ſpake by the ſpirit of God. But ſurely ſuch a conference, however it might frighten and ſilence, could neither inſtruct nor perſuade; and the King was ſo far from truſting, like his predeceſſor, to the force of truth and the aid of time, that in this very conference he threatened to employ another kind of force, if he did not meet with compliance in a time to be limited. The biſhops were at firſt to admoniſh paternally, and to confer amicably; but leſt they ſhould not ſucceed by preaching, writing, and living men into conformity, (the ſole means they ought to deſire; or if they deſired others, the ſole means they ought to be ſuffered to employ,) they were to have recourſe to compulſion afterwards. The ſame ſpirit reigned in the firſt ſpeech which this prince made to his parliament; for there he not only maſſed together, imprudently as well as unjuſtly, all the diſſenters from the eſtabliſhed church under the general denominations of Puritans and Novelliſts, but he declared them all inſufferable in any well governed commonwealth; ſo that he put them all out of his protection, even though they confined themſelves within thoſe bounds, to which cauſes of conſcience may reaſonably extend, and proſcribed them for their opinions, not their practices.

On theſe principles he proceeded, and what we have ſaid here may ſuffice, upon this head, for his whole reign. The conſequence of this conduct was, that thoſe ſects, who were not dangerous at firſt, became ſo at laſt. They became ſo, in ſome degree, from the moment the declarations we have mentioned were made; for nothing is found more true in nature and experience than this; that they who are oppreſſed by governments, will endeavour to change them; and that he, who makes himſelf terrible

terrible to multitudes, will have multitudes to fear. But this was not all. As he made these sects his enemies, so he gave them great advantages of popularity and strength. The first of these advantages, which we shall take notice of, arose from the great indulgence he shewed to the Roman-catholics, and the favourable sentiments of that religion, which he expressed on all private, and many public occasions. We need not descend into the particular instances; for though we give little credit to Deageant's memoirs in general, and none to what he says of a letter written by King James to the Pope, acknowledging him vicar of Christ, and head of the church; yet is there a multitude of other proofs, too notorious, and too well supported to be denied. We think it plain, upon the whole matter, that several passages in his conduct, both before and after his coming into England, were unworthy of a Protestant king at any time, and were equally impolitic at this time; when the zeal of Papists to attack, and of Protestants to defend, the reformation, was at the highest pitch; and when even the least condescension, on either side, would have been thought little less than apostacy. Fear for his person, and little notions of policy, were probably the motives which determined this part of his conduct; but, whatever the motives were, the effect was certainly this. He made the cause of the court to pass amongst many for the cause of Popery; and it was not hard by consequence for the Puritans, who were oppressed by the court, to make their cause pass for that of the reformation. We are far from thinking that this was properly the case on either side; but the appearances were strong enough to fix such preju-

prejudices in the minds of men, already prepared by jealouſy and ſuſpicion. This advantage, ſo fooliſhly given, operated ſtrongly againſt the court, both in this reign and the next. In this it was applied to no ill purpoſes. In the next, it was very wickedly improved; but they who gave it firſt, and who continued to give it afterwards, are juſtly to be reputed the accomplices of thoſe who improved it ſo wickedly, how much ſoever they ſtood in oppoſition to one another.

A ſecond advantage of popularity and ſtrength, which King James gave to the Puritans, was this. He ranked amongſt their party, nay he drove into that party, as much as he was able by ſevere uſage, all thoſe who ſtood up in defence even of civil liberty. The averſion which he expreſſed to the Puritans, formed a kind of league between him and the warmeſt of the eſtabliſhed clergy; and when theſe were once become a court party, we are not to wonder if others grew as warm as theſe, and if the greateſt part of that body of men united in a cauſe which flattered their paſſions, and opened the road of preferment to them. "No king no biſhop." was the language of the court. "No biſhop no "king," was that of the church. Had the monarchy and the hierarchy been attacked, this united zeal in a common cauſe would have been commendable and ſucceſsful too; for the nation was not now, nor for a long time afterwards, ſo diſtempered, that any faction could raiſe its head, with effect, againſt the juſt prerogative of the crown, and the eſtabliſhed rights of the church. But the truth requires we ſhould ſay, that this union was formed to offend and invade, and to extend both beyond the bounds

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preſcribed to them by the Engliſh conſtitution. It was great blindneſs in the clergy not to ſee, that to enlarge the bottom of the court, they narrowed their own; that they fixed a center of union, wherein all their divided enemies would meet, and unite with many who were then friends to the church, but might come, as it happened afterwards, from being againſt the clergy to be againſt the church itſelf. It was a great misfortune to the nation, that the clergy did not ſee theſe truths in time; ſince if they had ſeen them, they might have been happy inſtruments of preventing that miſchief, which followed ſoon after the time we ſpeak of, and that diviſion of intereſts between the crown and the people, which was created by King James, and hath proved ſo fatal to his poſterity. But to return. By a contrary conduct, by eſpouſing and ſanctifying the principles, and by promoting the meaſures of King James, the clergy became part of the faction of the court, and ſhared very unjuſtly the imputation of favouring Popery, but very juſtly that of advancing tyranny. This was a ſecond advantage, which King James gave to the Puritans. He varniſhed their cauſe with popularity, and he increaſed their numbers. He made Puritans in his time, and Janſeniſts have been ſince made in France, and Jacobites in Britain, by calling men ſo, and by treating them as ſuch. They muſt have been ſharp-ſighted, indeed, of whom my Lord Clarendon ſpeaks, and who could diſcern "the rebellion con-" triving from, if not before, the death of Queen " Elizabeth;" but they muſt be quite blind, who do not diſcern the ſeeds of rebellion ſowing in every part of the conduct of King James, and particularly

larly in this which we have now touched, the management of parties.

Theſe evils were aggravated, and the conſequences of them were precipitated by his conducting our national intereſts abroad, againſt the ſenſe of the nation.

During the firſt period into which we divide this reign, (that is, to the year 1614,) King James meddled little, and, to ſay the truth, had little occaſion to meddle in foreign affairs. The treaty which he made with Spain in 1604, had been much cenſured, and Sir C. Cornwallis, in a letter to the Lord Cranburne, aſſerts, "that England never loſt ſuch an "opportunity of winning honour and wealth unto "it, as by relinguiſhing the war againſt an exhauſted kingdom, and a prince held in little veneration, for ſuffering himſelf to be wholly governed "by a man generally hated."

This treaty, however, was not probably ſo bad as it had been repreſented, and the commerce opened with Spain became a ſource of inexhauſtable riches to our nation; but ſtill there was ſomething preposterous and mean in the conduct of King James abroad, even whilſt he had ſo little to do there, and ſo ſafe a part to act. He courted that very power, the power of Spain, whom Queen Elizabeth had broke, and who would have courted him, if he had known how to put ſo much as dignity in his proceedings. He diſobliged the Dutch, whoſe power had been raiſed by Queen Elizabeth, and who muſt have continued to depend on him, if he had known how to be either a friend or an enemy; and yet he bore moſt ignominiouſly, from this very people, the greateſt injuries and affronts imaginable. He had neither

neither the courage to chaſtiſe this infant ſtate, nor the ſenſe to protect it. Their treaty with their old maſters, the Spaniards, began in the year 1607, was continued in 1608, and ended in 1609, in a truce of twelve years. During the whole courſe of this long negotiation, King James ſhewed his partiality in favour of the Spaniards; and though he ſigned about this time, two treaties with the ſtates as ſovereigns, yet he made no ſcruple, upon ſome occaſions, of declaring them rebels. The death of the Duke of Cleves, and the diſputes about that ſucceſſion, preſented to Henry the fourth an opportunity he waited for; and he was ready, when Ravaillac ſtabbed him, to attack the houſe of Auſtria, whoſe power in Germany began once more to give umbrage, though Rodolphus the ſecond was ſtill on the imperial throne. King James left his troops with the Dutch, notwithſtanding the truce. They were employed in this quarrel; and we cannot think him to blame for taking no farther part in the hoſtilities. His views were, and they ought to have been at this time, and in this reſpect, very different from thoſe of that heroical King of France. But in the new ſcene of German affairs, which opened a few years afterwards, and which continued during the laſt period of his reign, (that is, from the year 1614,) nothing could be more ſcandalous than his taking no part at all, except his taking the part he did take. That he ſhould have made himſelf a principal in that terrible war which broke out in Germany in 1618, and which laſted thirty years, we cannot perſuade ourſelves; neither do we believe, that any man who does not take up his opinions on truſt, but examines this intricate and perplexed part

part of the hiſtory of the laſt century with care, will be of another mind; and yet the King muſt have made himſelf a principal in this war, if he had engaged in it, as he was adviſed by ſome to engage, and as he hath been blamed by many for not engaging. The cenſures under which he hath paſſed on this occaſion would have been juſter, if thoſe who have made them had diſtinguiſhed better between the patrimony of his children, by defending the palatinate, and promoting their grandeur by ſeconding their ambition; between contributing to ſupport the proteſtant intereſt abroad, and taking on his ſhoulders a load, which it was neither reaſonable nor poſſible that he ſhould bear; between that conduct which he ought to have held, as king of this iſland, and that which he might have been obliged to hold, if his dominions had lain on the continent. Our writings will not paſs, we believe, for apologies in favour of King James; and yet we ſhall explain this point a little leſs to his diſadvantage, perhaps, than it hath been uſually taken.

If King James had followed the advice of thoſe, who would have had him enter into an immediate war to maintain the Elector Palatine on the throne of Bohemia, he muſt have exhauſted and ruined this nation to ſupport it. He muſt have furniſhed ſubſidies to Bethlem Gabor and the Prince of Anſpach; he muſt have fed the war in Hungary; fomented the revolt in Auſtria; paid the army of the princes of the union; oppoſed the Duke of Bavaria in Bohemia, and Spinola in the Palatinate. Let us conſider in oppoſition to whom, and in concert with whom, he muſt have carried on this vaſt undertaking. On one ſide, the whole popiſh intereſt,

in the empire, was closely united, and the cause of Ferdinand was the common cause of the party. The popish interest, out of the empire, conspired in the same cause. The King of Poland assisted the Emperor in Hungary. Troops from Italy and a great army from the Netherlands acted for him in Germany. The purse of the Pope and that of the King of Spain were open to him. Even France, who ought in good policy to have opposed the house of Austria, was induced, by the bigotry of her court, and perhaps, by the private interest of Luines, to declare for the Emperor against the King of Bohemia. On the other side, the Protestant interest, in the empire, was far from being closely united, and farther still from making the cause of Frederick the common cause of the party. Even the princes of the union had different views; many of them leaned to the Emperor; none of them could be entirely depended upon; and the Elector of Saxony, the most powerful of the Protestant princes of the empire, was so far from uniting with the others, that he was first privately, and afterwards openly, but all along very steadily on the side of Ferdinand. Out of the empire, some assistance might have been expected from the King of Denmark and the Dutch; but even their accession must have been purchased; at least it must have been made useful, at the expence of Britain. What other allies could King James have hoped for; and who can see, without smiling, in that godly prelate, Archbishop Abbot's letter to Sir Robert Naunton, the name of the Duke of Bouillon, together with Tremouille, a rich prince in France, mentioned upon such an occasion? Short and imperfect as the account

account we have given is; thoſe, who know the ſtate of Europe at the time we ſpeak of, know that it is true; and if we were to look no farther than the repreſentations made by Juliana of Naſſau to her ſon, againſt his accepting the crown of Bohemia, we ſhould diſcover in them, with the true and fatal reaſons why King James did not aſſiſt Frederick at all, unanſwerable reaſons why he ought not to have taken upon him the Bohemian quarrel in the manner he muſt have taken it, if he had taken it upon him at that time. That King James ſhould have prepared for this ſtorm, which was long in gathering; that he ſhould have laboured to unite and to fortify the Proteſtants of Germany, before it happened; and to comfort, and ſuccour, and protect them, after it happened; that he had many fair opportunities of doing this, without engaging farther than the intereſt of Britain allowed; and that he neglected them all, we admit and are able to ſhew. He might have put himſelf on ſuch a foot in Europe, as to have mediated at leaſt (which was the only part he attempted to act) ſucceſsfully for the Bohemians, and to have ſcreened his ſon-in-law from the vengeance of the Emperor, and the ambition of the Duke of Bavaria. But he put himſelf on ſuch a foot, and he acquired ſuch a character, that he had no credit among the Proteſtants, nor much influence over his ſon-in-law, and that the Roman-catholic party, ſure of amuſing him, neglected and deſpiſed him. He might have declined taking the Bohemian quarrel upon him; and yet not have made his court to the Emperor and the King of Spain, by diſavowing and condemning Frederick, and even by ſuffering them not only to

drive this prince out of Bohemia, but to take the Palatinate from him and his family, and give a wound, almoſt mortal, to the whole Proteſtant cauſe in Germany. Nay, he did worſe. By fooliſh embaſſies and ridiculous negotiations, he gave time and furniſhed advantages, which could not have been had without his aſſiſtance to the popiſh party. By the ſame means he checked, he weakened, he diſcouraged, and more than once diſarmed the Proteſtant party. In ſhort, not only the principles of his conduct were wrong, but the meaſures of it compoſed ſuch a ſeries of blunders as we ſeldom find in hiſtory; becauſe it is hardly poſſible, in the courſe of nature, that ſuch characters, in ſuch ſituations, ſhould appear above once in a century.

It may be objected, perhaps, by ſome of the writers, who adorn and inſtruct the preſent age, that King James was univerſally and juſtly condemned for not taking the Bohemian quarrel upon him, as well as for not defending the Palatinate; and that he muſt have purſued in the laſt caſe, the ſame meaſures as we think him juſtified for not purſuing in the former. We ſhall not refute this objection by ſhewing, as it would be eaſy for us to do, in various particulars, the prodigious difference between the two caſes; the inſuperable difficulties he would have encountered in one, and the many facilities he would have had in the other. The deduction would be too long and extenſive for the narrow limits of theſe eſſays. But we ſhall content ourſelves with making two obſervations, ſufficient to ſatisfy any reaſonable man, and which will ſhew, at the ſame time, what different notions of the part this nation ought to take in foreign affairs, were entertained by

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our forefathers, from thoſe, which we, their wiſer offspring, have purſued. When King James took the reſolution of calling the parliament, which ſat in 1621, the battle of Prague was loſt, and Bohemia too with it. The * affections of the people were raiſed, but it was for the recovery of the Palatinate; and in this point the ſenſe of the parliament went along with the affections of the people. On the other point, the ſenſe of the parliament had not been expreſſed, there having been no parliament held from the year 1614 till this time. But what this ſenſe would have been, may be eaſily collected, from the advice given in the petition and remonſtrance of the commons, at this time. As zealous as they were to engage even in a war, for recovering the Palatinate, they were not enough tranſported by their zeal, or enough biaſſed in favour of any foreign intereſt, to forget the true intereſt of Britain. They adviſed the King to a war; but they adviſed him not to reſt upon a war in theſe parts only, which would conſume his treaſure and diſcourage his people. They adviſed that the bent of this war might be againſt that prince, (the King of Spain) whoſe armies and treaſures had firſt diverted and ſince maintained the war in the Palatinate. On which ſide now was the ſenſe of the nation; and how impertinent are they, who have quoted this ſenſe, to authoriſe our taking part in every German quarrel, by paying ſubſidies, maintaining armies, and involving ourſelves in all the affairs of the continent? How monſtruous is the abſurdity and im-

* See Ruſh. col.

pudence of * thoſe, who have aſſerted that the caſe of the people of the Palatinate, invaded by a powerful enemy, who pretended to nothing leſs than the conqueſt of them, is parallel to that of the people of Hanover, invaded by nobody, and over whom no foreign power pretends to any dominion! The parliament pointed out to King James a meaſure effectual for ſupporting the Proteſtant intereſt abroad; but ſuch a meaſure as this nation might purſue by exerting her natural ſtrength. The power of Spain ſupported the Emperor and the Popiſh league; an army of Spain conquered the Palatinate; and yet the artifices of that court deluded King James to ſuch a degree, that he dreamed of recovering the patrimony of his children by the good offices of the Spaniards, and was incapable of purſuing, in earneſt, any other meaſures, even at the time when Spinola was ſtripping them of this patrimony, and reducing them to ſeek their bread in another country. To this dependence on Spain he ſacrificed not only them, but his own honour, the affection of his ſubjects, the proſperity of his kindoms, and the ſecurity of the Proteſtant religion. It was this magic charm, which the parliament endeavoured in vain to diſſolve, by preſſing him to a war with Spain, which his maritime force would have carried on principally; which would have ſtopped that ſource, from whence the Popiſh party in Germany derived ſo many ſupplies; and which would have rendered the Proteſtant party, by conſequence, a more equal match for the

* See obſervations on the preſent ſtate of affairs.

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Emperor. But this was not the ſole wiſe and honeſt view, which the parliament propoſed, by pointing out and inſiſting on this meaſure. There was another, which touched them more nearly, and which they had more at heart. We ſhall mention it in our next diſcourſe, and it will lead us from our obſervations on this reign to thoſe few on the next, with which we intend to cloſe, at leaſt for the preſent, all our remarks on the Hiſtory of England.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

ANother object, beſides recovering the Palatinate, which the parliament had in view, when they preſſed King James to break with Spain, was preventing the marriage of the Prince of Wales to the Infanta. He had been bantered and abuſed by the Spaniards, when he treated a marriage between his eldeſt ſon, Prince Henry, and Anne of Auſtria; and yet no ſooner did the Duke of Lerma, in the year 1616, make ſome overtures of marrying the Infanta Mary, ſecond doughter of Philip the third, to Prince Charles, but this Solomon of ours catched at the bait, which was thrown out to him, and hung faſt on the hook for ſeven years together.

The ſcheme of farther uſurpations in Germany was already laid, by the houſe of Auſtria; and the character of Ferdinand, who was to ſucceed Matthias, and who did ſucceed him three years afterwards, gave hopes of puſhing theſe uſurpations with vigour and advantage. The part of Spain had been great in promoting theſe deſigns. It was eſſential to their ſucceſs that it ſhould be ſo likewiſe in the execution of them. No oppoſition, of any moment, was to be apprehended from France, where the principles of deſpotiſm and of bigot-popery prevailed more than ever, and who had concluded, in the year 1615, a double marriage with Spain. The truce of twelve years made with the Dutch in 1609, would enable the Spaniards to ſupport the Popiſh league

league from the Low Countries, as in all cafes they might do from Italy; and if they could keep the King of Great Britain from diverting the forces of Spain in the mean time, there was reafon to hope that thefe united powers might conquer both the Palatinates, as well as Bohemia, and break the force of the Proteftant league in Germany, before the expiration of the truce, and the renewal of the war with the United Provinces of the Low Countries, fhould create another diverfion. This was a principal part of the plan laid by the houfe of Auftria, and the other Roman Catholic princes, for oppreffing the Proteftants and invading the liberties of Germany. To the eternal infamy of King James, it fucceeded even beyond the hopes of thofe, who laid it. The hints which Digby gave him in the very beginning of this negotiation, might have put him on his guard, and a thoufand things, which happened in the courfe of it, would have undeceived, provoked and determined any other man. His prefumption, his fear, and, above all, his perverfe fyftem of policy prevented any effects of thefe kinds. We forbear entering into the particulars of what he did for Spain; of what he fuffered Spain to do; and of all the indignities, which he received from every branch of the houfe of Auftria, during thefe tranfactions. Moft of them have been obferved, and are fufficiently known; and it would be an unneceffary work to point out fome few inftances more, which have not been, perhaps, taken notice of, or explained as much as they deferved. We fhall fpare ourfelves and our readers this difagreeable recollection, and only obferve in general the plan, upon which King James appears to have acted; as we have

have obſerved what the plan was of thoſe, who made ſo fatal an uſe of his weakneſs. His ſilly pride could not be ſatisfied, unleſs he matched his ſon with a daughter of Spain, or France. He had been diſappointed formerly on that ſide, and lately on this. He was reſolved at any rate not to be diſappointed a third time. The immenſe ſum, which had been promiſed for the Infanta's portion, tempted him the more, becauſe for ſeveral years he would call no parliament to grant him ſupplies, and he found it hard to raiſe them, even in ſmall proportions, without a parliament. He imagined vainly, that this alliance with Spain would give him great conſideration abroad; and wickedly, that it would afford him means of raiſing and extending his prerogative at home. He ſaw the miſchiefs, which accrued to the Proteſtant intereſt abroad, either as immediate, or as remote effects of his conduct; either in conſequence of what he did, or in conſequence of what he neglected; and we are willing to believe that he felt, in ſome degree, thoſe, which fell on the family, into which he had married his daughter. But the intereſt of the Proteſtants in general touched him little. Abroad, as well as at home, he choſe rather by condeſcenſions and ſubmiſſions to court his enemies, than to unite his friends among one another, and to attach them to himſelf. In his zeal for the imaginary rights of princes, he could not forgive the Elector Palatine for taking arms againſt the Emperor; and whilſt he looked on him as a rebel, forgot that he was his ſon. If he remembered it at any time, and felt any concern, the ſentiment was ſurely very faint; ſince we find that the diſtant and uncertain proſpect of making

making ſome tolerable compoſition for this unhappy prince, by the interceſſion of Spain, was always ſufficient to calm his paternal ſolicitude. He ſaw without doubt, at leaſt during the life of Philip the third, who did not die till the year 1621, that Spain was not much in earneſt to give him the Infanta; but he ſeemed reſolved to overcome all difficulties and to determine the councils of Spain and even of Rome, in his favour, by dint of conceſſions. The truth is, he went ſo far in his conceſſions at laſt, that theſe councils ſeemed to be determined. Thoſe of Spain, at leaſt, were ſo moſt certainly in the year 1623, even before the voyage of the Prince into Spain; and the articles ſworn to both by him, when he was there, and by his father here, amounted to little leſs than a direct eſtabliſhment of popery. That this charge is juſt will, we think, appear evident, when it ſhall be remembered, without entering into more particulars, that by theſe articles the King and Prince of Wales engaged for the ſuſpenſion, and even abrogation of all laws made againſt Roman Catholics; that they engaged never to conſent to the making any new laws of the ſame kind; and that, as the children to be born of this marriage were to be educated by their mother, till ten years of age, in compliance with the King of Spain's demands; ſo the Prince was prevailed on to promiſe that he would lengthen this term till twelve years, according to the deſire of the Pope.

Thus was King James amuſed till the beginning of the year 1623, when the Upper Palatinate and the dignity of elector were taken from Frederick, and conferred on the Duke of Bavaria, by the diet of Ratiſbon; or, to ſpeak more properly, by the pre-

prerogative of Ferdinand, who acted in the diet as dogmatically and as absolutely as King James endeavoured to act in his parliaments. When this point was gained by amusing King James, and the Protestant interest was broken in Germany; the next point was to be carried by concluding with him and making the match on such terms, as might secure an immediate toleration, and open the prospect of a future establishment of popery in this kingdom. The parliament of 1621 beheld part of this scene, and apprehended, upon very just grounds, the sequel. They saw the fatal consequences of the negotiation, whilst it was in suspence, and they dreaded those, which would follow the conclusion of it. To stop the first and to prevent the last, there was but one expedient; the forcing King James into a war, for recovering the Palatinate. This they endeavoured with all their might; but he meant nothing less, and had called a parliament, purely to get money from his people, on pretence of a war he was resolved not to make. Some money he got by this trick; but when he had squandered it away in trifling negotiations and a ridiculous shew of war, he could get no more; so that this parliament ended as others had done, and even with greater dissatisfaction between the King and the people, both on account of his conducting foreign affairs against the interest and sense of the nation, and of his attacking more openly than ever the privileges of parliament. The parliament remonstrated, petitioned, protested. The King dissolved the parliament in rage; imprisoned several members of the house of commons, and even some of the house of lords. He resumed his project of governing without

out parliaments, ſince he could not govern as ill as he had a mind to govern with them. But this project was not purſued above two years; for what his parliament could not obtain from him, an unworthy favourite did obtain. Motives of private intereſt, and perhaps of a worſe nature, made that great turn in affairs, which ſo many motives of a public nature and of national intereſt had never been able to make. In ſhort, a cabal at court prevailed on this Prince to alter his conduct in thoſe very points, on which the parliament, ſeconded by the clamours of the whole nation, had been never able to prevail. We ſhall not attempt to gueſs, as many have done, at the ſecret reaſons, which determined Buckingham, nor at thoſe, by which he determined the Prince of Wales to undertake the romantic and, in every light, ridiculous journey into Spain, to carry the treaty of marriage to a concluſion; then to break it off again in ſo abrupt and ungracious a manner; and to become ſo earneſt for engaging in a war with Spain. Whatever theſe reaſons were, the reaſon given for breaking the match was not the true one. The reſtitution of the Palatinate had been very cooly preſſed, not to ſay neglected, even whilſt the Prince was at Madrid; and yet after he came from thence, the King of Spain had ſigned an act, by which he engaged for this reſtitution; ſo that on the principles, on which this negotiation had been conducted, there ſeemed to be no reaſon for breaking it off given by Spain at the time, when it was broken. But the parliament, which King James called upon this occaſion, proceeded like the laſt, on other principles than the court had done, and was therefore, very conſiſtent-

ly with theſe principles, ready to ſeize the opportunity offered, by adviſing the King to break the match, and enter into a war for recovering the Palatinate, and by giving him very large ſupplies for this purpoſe. We cannot, upon this occaſion, ſubſcribe to the cenſure paſſed by my Lord Clarendon, how much ſoever we eſteem his hiſtory, and honour the memory of that noble hiſtorian; for, in the firſt place, the ſupplies, given by this laſt parliament of King James, were not only very large, as we have juſt now ſaid, but they were ſuch as the King was contented with, and thanked the parliament for, in his anſwer to the ſpeaker of the houſe of commons. Secondly, We cannot agree that it was the parliament, properly ſpeaking, who prevailed on the King, and engaged him in the war. The parliament adviſed him to it, indeed; but nothing can be more manifeſt than this, even by my Lord Clarendon's own account, that the meaſure was reſolved on before, and that it was the meaſure of the Prince and of Buckingham, which the King, however unwillingly, adopted. The parliament in truth did no more than adviſe him to break a treaty, which he had already broken; and thoſe, who reflect on precedent paſſages, will eaſily concur with us that if this had not been the caſe, it would not have been in the power of the parliament to break the match; much leſs to engage the King in the war. Thirdly, if ſubſequent parliaments did not ſupport thoſe great mountains of promiſes, as they are called, which this parliament raiſed, we ſhall venture to affirm that it was the fault of the court, not of the parliaments.

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This laſt article requires to be ſet in a very clear light, becauſe it opens to us a ſource of cauſes, from whence a great part of the miſchiefs, which followed in the next reign, aroſe; or by which, at leaſt, they were aggravated and precipitated. Firſt, therefore, we obſerve that the meaſures of the court were ſo fooliſhly taken for puſhing the war, that if parliaments had given by millions, and given with as little ſtint in thoſe days, as they have given ſince, their grants muſt have been ineffectual to any good purpoſe. Juſt before the death of King James, an army had been raiſed for the Palatinate war, under the command of the famous Mansfeldt. The French firſt, and the Dutch afterwards, refuſed paſſage to theſe troops, or even to ſuffer them to land. The cry of the court was loud againſt the perfidy of France, as it had been againſt the Emperor and Spain in their turns. This will be always the caſe, when ſilly miniſters bungle themſelves into difficulties, of which others make their profit; or when they knaviſhly engage a national quarrel for ſome private, indirect intereſt, and inflame the people to reſent imaginary injuries. But the truth is, that King James had nobody to blame but himſelf, when he took general and ambiguous anſwers for ſufficient engagements, and did not ſee that France would refuſe paſſage to theſe troops for the ſame reaſons as made her decline entering, at that time, into a league againſt the houſe of Auſtria.

Another blunder committed about the ſame time, by this wiſe King, and that wiſe miniſter, his ſcholar, Buckingham muſt be mentioned. He was to take poſſeſſion of Frankendal, which had been depoſited in the hands of the Infanta Iſabella. The

Infanta agreed to yield the place to him, and to give paſſage to his troops, who were to compoſe the garriſon, according to her engagements; but refuſed to anſwer for their paſſage over the lands of the empire, to which ſhe was not engaged. Then, and not till then, he made this diſcovery in geography, that his troops muſt march over the lands of the empire, to get from the Low Countries into the Palatinate. Such blunders as theſe were ſufficient to diſguſt the parliaments of that age, and to make them backward in ſupplying a war thus managed. Much more reaſon had they to be ſo, when they ſaw the ſame managers, and the ſame management, continue in the next reign. This diſguſt at the management of the war, however, would not have produced ſo many fatal conſequences, if it had ſtood alone. But we obſerve, in the ſecond place, that the parliaments which met after the acceſſion of King Charles, became incenſed, as they diſcovered more and more that the account given by the Duke of Buckingham, in the reign of King James, and on which the reſolutions of that parliament had been taken, was falſe in almoſt every point. A ſyſtem of lies, dreſſed up to deceive the nation, and impoſed on the parliament, could neither remain undiſcovered, nor eſcape the reſentment and indignation it deſerved, when diſcovered. Beſides, that parliament, and the nation too, when they expreſſed ſo much joy at the breach with Spain, flattered themſelves that, by preventing the marriage with the Infanta, they had prevented all the dangers which they apprehended from that marriage; whereas it appeared ſoon afterwards, that they ſtood expoſed to the very ſame dangers by the marriage concluded

concluded with France; nay, to greater, since the education of the children by the mother, that is in Popery, had been confined to ten years by the former treaty, and was extended to thirteen by the latter. In short, it cannot be denied, and my Lord Clarendon owns, that as the insolence of Buckingham caused the war with Spain, so his lust and his vanity alone threw the nation into another with France. Spain was courted first without reason, and affronted afterwards without provocation. Ships were lent to the King of France against his Protestant subjects; and the persecution of his Protestant subjects was made the pretence of a rupture with him. Thus was the nation led from one extravagant project to another, at an immense charge, with great diminution of honour and infinite loss to trade, by the ignorance, private interest, and passion of one man. The conduct therefore of the parliament, who attacked this man, was perfectly consistent with the conduct of that parliament who had so much applauded him; and one cannot observe without astonishment, the slip made by the noble historian we have just quoted, when he affirms, that the same men who had applauded him, attacked him, without imputing the least crime to him, that was not as much known when they applauded him, as when they attacked him. Now it is plain, that many of the crimes imputed to him, in the reign of King Charles, when he was attacked, could not be known, and that many others had not been even committed in the reign of King James, when he was upon one single occasion applauded.

To the diſguſts taken at the management of foreign affairs, muſt be added, thoſe which were daily given by the court in the management of domeſtic affairs. Real, not imaginary grievances, aroſe, and were continued in every part of the adminiſtration. Some of theſe King Charles, like his father, was obſtinately bent to maintain, and his right of impoſing them was aſſerted. Others were diſguiſed and excuſed, rather than defended; but in redreſſing even theſe, he ſhewed ſuch a reluctance, that he complied without obliging, and increaſed the diſguſt of his people, even whilſt he granted their requeſts. We have ſaid, in a former diſcourſe, that King Charles came a partyman to the throne, and that he continued an invaſion on the people's rights, whilſt he imagined himſelf only concerned in the defence of his own. In advancing this propoſition, we were far from meaning a compliment at the expence of truth. We avow it as an opinion we have formed, on reading the relations publiſhed on all ſides, and to which, it ſeems to us, that all the authentic anecdotes of thoſe times may be reconciled. This prince had ſucked in with his milk thoſe abſurd principles of government, which his father was ſo induſtrious, and, unhappily for king and people, ſo ſucceſsful in propagating. He found them eſpouſed as true principles, both of religion and policy, by a whole party in the nation, whom he eſteemed friends to the conſtitution, in church and ſtate. He found them oppoſed by a party, whom he looked on indiſcriminately as enemies to the church, and to monarchy. Can we wonder that he grew zealous in a cauſe, which he underſtood to concern him ſo nearly, and in which he ſaw ſo many men, who

who had not the ſame intereſt, and might therefore be ſuppoſed to act on a principle of conſcience, equally zealous? Let any one, who hath been deeply and long engaged in the conteſts of party, aſk himſelf, on cool reflection, whether prejudices, concerning men and things, have not grown up and ſtrengthened with him, and obtained an uncontroulable influence over his conduct. We dare appeal to the inward ſentiments of every ſuch perſon. With this habitual bias upon him King Charles came to the throne; and, to compleat the misfortune, he had given all his confidence to a madman. An honeſt miniſter might have ſhewn him how wrong his meaſures were; a wiſe one how ill timed. Buckingham was incapable of either. The violence and haughtineſs of his temper confirmed his maſter in the purſuit of theſe meaſures; and the character of the firſt miniſter became that of the adminiſtration. Other circumſtances which often happen, happened likewiſe in this caſe. The miniſter was univerſally hated; the King was not. To ſupport the miniſter, it was neceſſary that the prerogative ſhould be ſtrained, and violent and unpopular means ſhould be employed. To ſupport the government, nothing of this ſort was neceſſary. Nay, the very contrary meaſures were neceſſary to reconcile the king to his people, and to ſtop in time that alienation of their minds from him, which began even then to appear. In this difference of intereſts, thoſe of the crown were ſacrificed to thoſe of the miniſter. King Charles, who had encouraged parliamentary proſecutions in his father's reign, would not ſuffer them in his own. He diſſolved his parliaments, and broke

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almoſt all the few ties of union which remained between himſelf and the nation, that he might ſcreen ſome of the moſt unworthy men, who ever deſerved a prince or diſhonoured a court. Before the death of Buckingham, irreparable miſchief was done. "The diſtemper of the nation was ſo univerſal, (according to my Lord Clarendon), that "all wiſe men looked upon it as the prediction of "the deſtruction and diſſolution that would follow." This prediction was ſoon verified. The King executed what he had often threatened. Parliaments were laid aſide. The very mention of them was forbid; and he continued to govern without any for twelve years. During this interval the diſtemper lurked indeed, but it grew more malignant; and if a national ſerenity appeared, about the time when the King went into Scotland, it appeared juſt when the poiſon worked moſt effectually, and began to ſeize the heart. Jealouſies about religion and liberty were now at their height. The former, as far as they affected the King and his Proteſtant miniſters, were ill founded; but, for that very reaſon, it would have been eaſy to cure them; and if they had been cured in time, as we think, on my Lord Clarendon's authority, that nothing could have led the Scots nation into rebellion, ſo are we perſuaded, that a great motive and ſpur to the rebellion in England would have been taken away. The latter were certainly but too well founded. The King had, in a manner, renounced the conſtitution; and, inſtead of governing with the aſſiſtance and concurrence of a parliament, he governed by illegal acts of power, which the council, the ſtar-chamber, and

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the high commiſſion exerciſed. There was ſomething ſtill more dangerous to liberty in practice. Not only the government was carried on without law, or againſt law, but the judges were become the inſtruments of arbitrary power; and that law, which ſhould have been the protection of property, was rendered, by their corrupt interpretations of it, ſo great a grievance, that "the foundations of right "were to the apprehenſion and underſtanding of "wiſe men, (ſays my Lord Clarendon), never more "in danger to be deſtroyed."

Whilſt things were in this ſituation here, King Charles lighted up another fire in Scotland, by reſuming the project of modelling that church, which King James had begun. Archbiſhop Laud, who had neither temper nor knowledge of the world enough, to be entruſted with the government of a private college, conducted this enterprize, and precipitated the public ruin. The Puritans of England ſoon united in a common cauſe with the Puritans of Scotland; and the army, which the latter had raiſed, marched into England. Many of thoſe who had appeared againſt the court, and even ſome of thoſe who were on the ſide of the court, favoured, in different manners, the Scots, and hoped to apply this force, and to improve this incident, ſo as to reſtrain the prerogative within known, perhaps narrower bounds, and to ſtrengthen the barriers of public liberty. That this might have been brought about, and that the civil war which followed might have been prevented, appeared very manifeſtly in the temper and proceedings of the parliament, which met in April 1640, when all had been done,

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which could be done, to deſtroy the conſtitution; for if the King had been able to continue to govern without parliaments, the conſtitution had been deſtroyed; and when calling a parliament was viſibly the effect of neceſſity and fear, not choice, the parliament which was called, ſhewed wonderful order and ſobriety in their whole behaviour. If ſome paſſion had appeared in their debates, it might have been well excuſed in an houſe of commons aſſembled at ſuch a time; and yet ſcarce an angry word were thrown out. The few that eſcaped from ſome, was either ſilently diſliked, or openly diſapproved. The King, even in this criſis of affairs, preſerved the ſame carriage he had formerly uſed towards them, and ſhewed too plainly that he regarded them only as tax-layers. In a word, about a month after their meeting, he diſſolved them, and as ſoon as he had diſſolved them he repented, but he repented too late of his raſhneſs. Well might he repent, for the veſſel was now full, and this laſt drop made the waters of bitterneſs overflow. Here we draw the curtain, and put an end to our remarks by obſerving, firſt, that if the ſpirit of liberty had once relaxed in the ſpace of almoſt forty years, liberty muſt have been ſwallowed up by prerogative; ſecondly, that after theſe long conteſts between the King and the people, and when the latter had received the utmoſt provocations, the ſpirit of liberty was not tranſported into any exceſs; determined to defend the people, but unwilling to offend the King. The King (and he alone could have done it) forced the affairs of the nation, as he had put his own long before, into the hands of a faction. The true friends of the conſtitution were divided, and, di-

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vided, were too weak to prevail on either ſide. The ſpirit of faction, not the ſpirit of liberty, is anſwerable for all which followed; and who is anſwerable for reducing the conteſt on both ſides, to be the conteſt of faction, may, we think, be ſufficiently collected from what hath been ſaid in theſe diſcourſes.

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

SIR,

SINCE you have gone through the taſk which you undertook at my deſire, and have carried your remarks on the hiſtory of England as far as you judge them neceſſary, at this time, I think myſelf obliged to return you thanks for your trouble, and to ſay ſomething to you concerning the clamor raiſed, and the conduct held, upon this occaſion, by thoſe who, not content with the merit of being your adverſaries, have declared themſelves ſuch at laſt to the very being of the Britiſh conſtitution, and to the principles on which the preſent eſtabliſhment is built, and on which alone it can ſtand ſecure.

Before I left the town, nay as ſoon as my firſt letter to you appeared, the whole poſſe of miniſterial ſcribblers were ſummoned. Their numbers were augmented; perhaps their penſions. Their ſtrength indeed, continued much the ſame, but their fury redoubled. At my return to London, I am informed, that theſe weekly ſwarms have continued to buz about ever ſince; that the inſects have been diſperſed by every flap of your pen; but that like true inſects, they have ſtill gathered again, and renewed their din. I ſay that I am informed of this; becauſe, among other circumſtances which compoſe the eaſe and quiet of a country life, we are ſure of not

not being infeſted there by theſe mighty ſwarms of little creatures. As their lives are ſhort, the extent in which they ramble is narrow, and few of them take their flight beyond the bills of mortality.

The manner in which theſe writers have ſupported the diſpute between you and them, and the explanations to which they have been puſhed, confirm all the ſuſpicions which it was natural to entertain, when ſo great an alarm was taken at the firſt direct avowal of an attempt to revive the ſpirit of liberty, and to recal to the minds of men the true notions of the Britiſh conſtitution. They were ſo earneſt to diſcourage the proſecution of ſuch a deſign; they were ſo eager to find fault, where ſo little fault was to be found, that they catched at every word in which they imagined the leaſt ſlip had been made, though the ſubject would not have been affected, nor the merits of the cauſe have been altered, if theſe ſlips had been real, and had proceeded from my ignorance, as the objections proceeded from theirs.

I ſhould not ſo much as mention this, if it was not neceſſary to ſhew, that your real crime, as well as mine, towards the perſons who encourage and direct theſe authors, is our ſtarting the ſubject, not our manner of treating it. Their anger appeared, the clamour of their party was raiſed, and all the powers of ſcurrility and calumny were called forth to their aid, before any of theſe pretences were found out, which they afterwards ſo meanly and ſo immorally employed againſt us. To prove this beyond the contradiction of any man of ſenſe and candour, it will be only neceſſary to appeal to the whole ſcope of my firſt letters to you, which raiſed the ſtorm;

for what do thoſe letters contain beſides general and inoffenſive reflections on the nature of liberty and of faction, and on the neceſſity of keeping the ſpirit of liberty alive and active, even in times of apparent ſecurity? Your writings were juſtified, indeed, in theſe letters; but ſo they had been in others, and on many precedent occaſions. The charge of Jacobitiſm was refuted, indeed with the contempt it deſerved, and factious deſigns of another kind were pointed out; but factious deſigns had been imputed to the ſame perſons before, and upon the ſame grounds. It remains then that this new alarm was taken, as I juſt now ſaid, at the general deſign of thoſe papers; and if that was ſufficient to give ſuch an alarm, ſure I am that you are more than juſtified for all you writ before this diſpute begun, and for all you have publiſhed in the courſe of it.

The old gentleman who defended you in our former letters, thought you deſerved the acknowledgements of every honeſt man for attempting to revive this ſpirit, even ſuppoſing you to have no other reaſon than your obſervation that a contrary temper prevailed. How much is this reaſon enforced, how much more do you deſerve the acknowledgements of every honeſt man, if it is become evident not only that a ſupine temper, contrary to the activity of this ſpirit had been raiſed, and that principles deſtructive of all liberty, and particularly adapted to deſtroy that of the Britiſh government, are avowed, taught, and propagated? If I pronounced too haſtily, in my ſecond letter, that the maſk was pulled off, ſurely we may now ſay, upon knowledge, not belief, that the maſk is fallen off from your adverſaries in the ſcuffle. I ſhall not repeat what is ſaid

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in your diſcourſes, nor add any thing to them. You have there quoted the doctrines of ſlavery. You have ſhewed the direct and indirect tendency of them all; and you have remarked that ſome of them have been taught even by thoſe who have in the ſame breath admitted the conſequences of them. Nothing leſs therefore than a conſtant and vigorous oppoſition, of which you have ſet us the example, will be able to ſtop the progreſs of thoſe pernicious doctrines. The principles which King James the firſt eſtabliſhed, were not more abſurd than theſe. Their tendency was more obvious; but, for that reaſon they were leſs dangerous. If thoſe principles prevailed very far by time and encouragement, and had like to have prevailed farther; why ſhould not theſe have the ſame, or greater ſucceſs? It may be ſaid, perhaps, that the authority of the crown helped the progreſs of the former, which is not our preſent caſe. To this diſtinction I ſhall ſubmit very readily; but if theſe principles have gained ſome ground already, (and that they have gained ſome cannot be denied), without this authority to enforce them; is there not reaſon to fear that they may gain more, and is not every degree they gain a degree more of danger to this conſtitution of government? Surely, Sir, there can remain no doubt in the breaſt of any man, who hath given the leaſt attention to the diſputes between you and your adverſaries, whether they or you are on the ſide of liberty; and therefore it is an aggravation of their guilt, that they have endeavoured to make your writings paſs for an oppoſition to the preſent happy eſtabliſhment, and their cauſe for that of the crown. You and I have ſufficiently declared ourſelves, and

anſwered them, on the firſt head. If they had been able to produce an inſtance, where, departing from your ſubject, you had given occaſion to draw an odious parallel, the intention of drawing ſuch a parallel might, with ſome colour, have been imputed to you; but ſince they have not been able to do this, and have been defied to do it, the reproach and infamy of making ſuch parallels, as well as the ſcandalous immorality of imputing them to others, muſt lie at their door. Let us ſee how well their pretenſions are ſupported on the ſecond head, and whether we cannot prove, without any forced conſtructions of their words, or arbitrary interpretations of their meaning, that the open and ſecret abettors of theſe writers are either enemies of the preſent eſtabliſhment, or have ſome private intereſt more at their heart than the true intereſt of this eſtabliſhment.

This eſtabliſhment is founded on the principles of liberty; on the very principles you have maintained. It was made by the people of Great Britain, to ſecure the poſſeſſion of their liberty, as well as their religion. Had contrary principles prevailed, either thoſe which tend to ſubvert the conſtitution, by raiſing prerogative, and which were juſtly objected to ſome of the Tories formerly; or thoſe which tend to ſubvert it, by undermining liberty, and which are as juſtly objected to ſome of the Whigs now; this eſtabliſhment could never have been made. Who are enemies and who are friends, therefore to public liberty, and to the preſent eſtabliſhment? Are you their enemy who defend, not only the general principles of liberty, but the particular principles, and the particular ends, on which,

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and for which, this eſtabliſhment was made? Are your adverſaries friends to either, when they only ſeem to admit ſome general notions of liberty, that they may promote with greater effect, on particular occaſions, the doctrines of ſlavery; and when they endeavour to deſtroy the principles, and to defeat the ends of the preſent eſtabliſhment? The revolution and the acts of ſettlement have ſecured us againſt the dangers which were formerly apprehended from prerogative. To what purpoſe are meaſures and principles of policy daily pleaded for, which would expoſe us to greater dangers than theſe? Why are ſuch inceſſant pains taken, to ſhow by what means liberty may be undermined, and our conſtitution deſtroyed, even now, after all we have done, and all we have ſuffered, to ſecure one, and to improve the other? I ſhall not give particular anſwers to theſe queſtions; nor offer to aſſign the private intereſt which the perſons, who are guilty of this, may have at heart; for I will, upon no occaſion, even ſeem to follow the example of your adverſaries; nor preſume to deliver my ſuſpicions, though real and well-grounded, as the intentions of other men. This alone I will repeat; that they who argue, and hire others to argue in this manner, do in fact promote ſome intereſt, which is repugnant to the ends for which the people of this nation eſtabliſhed the Proteſtant ſucceſſion and the preſent ſettlement of the crown. They have not yet attacked the religion, but they manifeſtly attack the liberty of their country; and as much as theſe two are interwoven together, though it be true, that whenever our religion is in danger, our civil liberty muſt be ſo likewiſe; yet it is true that religion may be ſafe and civil liberty in danger.

I have nothing more to add upon this head, before I proceed to that which ſhall conclude my letter, except my deſires that you will perſiſt, and my hopes that you will ſucceed in the cauſe you have undertaken; the cauſe of your country, the cauſe of truth and of liberty. The means you employ are thoſe of argument and perſuaſion; the lawful, and the ſole lawful means, which can be employed, to rouſe an indolent, to inform a deceived, to reclaim a corrupt, or to reconcile a divided people. Let the factious continue to aſſert, as they have had already the impudence and the folly to do, in one of their miniſterial pamphlets, that the faults they are pleaſed to aſcribe to the people of Great Britain, "* render an army neceſſary." Inſtead of endeavouring to perſuade and to win, let them endeavour to force and corrupt their countrymen. The ſpirit of liberty abhors ſuch means, and the cauſe of liberty would be diſhonoured by them. If this nation was as corrupt and depraved as it is ſaid to be, by thoſe who do their utmoſt to corrupt and deprave it; if our country was in that declining ſtate, and the freedom of our government as near its period as they affirm, there would remain no part for any honeſt man to take except that of ſitting ſilently down and periſhing in the common ſhipwreck; but ſurely this is not yet our caſe, nor will it become our caſe, unleſs we are induced to believe it ſo; unleſs we make our ruin irretrievable by ſtruggling no longer againſt it. There are men, many we think, who have not bowed the knee to BAAL, nor worſhipped the brazen image. We may therefore hope

* See ſome obſervations on the preſent ſtate of affairs.

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that there is ſtill a bleſſing in ſtore for us. In all events, M. D'ANVERS, you are ſure of one advantage, which no violence, no injuſtice can take from you; the inward ſatisfaction of having ſerved your country, to the utmoſt of your power, by thoſe lawful means, which the conſtitution of its government allows, and by no others.

If I hear in that retreat, to which age, the circumſtances of fortune, and, above all, the temper of my mind determine me, that you ſucceed, I ſhall rejoice in the common joy. If I hear that you fail, my concern for you will be loſt in the common calamity.

The article with which I propoſe to conclude my letter, is of ſuch a nature that I cannot omit it, on this occaſion, with any regard to truth, juſtice, honour and the ſentiments of a moſt reaſonable indignation. The writers, who are employed againſt you, have received, with an unlimited commiſſion to rail, particular inſtructions to direct their Billinſgate chiefly at two gentlemen. The art of blackening characters, by private cloſet whiſpers, hath been always practiſed, when power and confidence have been given to the inſolent and the baſe. Perhaps, it may have been thought proper, at this time, to confirm the effect of ſuch inſinuations by an echo from the preſs; and to prevent a general national clamour from ſounding in ſome ears, by raiſing an artificial clamour round about them; but whatever the deſign may have been, ſure I am that this ſtrain of malice could not have been employed againſt men, who value it leſs, or who hold in greater contempt both the contrivance and the contrivers. This they may do, becauſe they are falſe-

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ly and maliciouſly accuſed; but he, who is the object of a juſt clamour and of national hatred, and who cannot turn his eyes on himſelf, without confeſſing to himſelf that he is a principal cauſe of the grievances of his country, muſt tremble at a clamour, which he knows ought, and which he hath reaſon to fear, will ſooner or later, prevail againſt him.

The calumny againſt one of the gentlemen, mentioned above, is confined to two heads; that he hath left his friends and party, and that he is urged to oppoſe the miniſter by the ſtings of diſappointed ambition. How ridiculous is the charge, and on whom can ſuch ſtuff impoſe? Hath he changed his notions of right and wrong in matters of government? Hath he renounced the principles of good policy, which he formerly profeſſed? His greateſt enemy is defied to ſhew that he hath; and yet unleſs this can be ſhewn, nothing can be more impertinent, or more ſilly than the imputation of leaving his friends and party. If he purſues the ſame general principles of conduct, with which he firſt ſet out, and is in oppoſition now to ſome few of thoſe, with whom he concurred then, they have left him, becauſe they have left the principles they profeſſed. He left neither. For inſtance, he inveighs againſt public profuſion and private corruption. He combats both with a conſtant inflexibility, which might have done honour to a Roman citizen, in the beſt times of that commonwealth. Hath he left his friends in doing this? No; they, who oppoſe him in it, have left both him and virtue; and ſuch men though they have ſometimes had the honour to concur with him, could never be his friends.

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Is the latter part of the change better founded? Is it not a manifeſt begging of the queſtion, and a begging of it on the leaſt probable ſide? He aſſiſted a miniſter to riſe to power. He oppoſes this miniſter in power. *Ergo*, ſpite and reſentment are his motives. May not the abuſe, which he apprehends this miniſter makes of his power, may not meaſures, which he fears are wicked, knows are weak, and ſees obſtinately purſued, be his motives? May not dangerous ambition, inſatiable avarice, and inſolent behaviour be his provocations? May not this gentleman think himſelf the more obliged to contribute to this miniſter's fall, for having contributed ſo much to his elevation? Let me aſk farther, whom we ſhall ſooneſt ſuſpect to have been actuated by ſentiments of private intereſt; the perſon accuſed, or his accuſer? Whoſe circumſtances moſt demanded, whoſe family moſt required an increaſe of wealth and fortune; thoſe of the accuſed, or thoſe of the accuſer? Who hath given greater proofs of avarice to gather and profuſion to ſquander; the accuſed, or the accuſer? In whom have we ſeen ſtronger evidences of that vindictive temper, which prompts to perſonal ſpite and reſentment; in the accuſed, or the accuſer? If we may form any judgment of the gentleman accuſed, there is not the leaſt colour of reaſon to ſuppoſe that his oppoſition proceeds from a ſpirit of ambition, or a deſign of puſhing himſelf into the adminiſtration. He hath already poſſeſſed two very conſiderable employments in the ſtate; one of which he voluntarily laid down, as by his conduct in parliament, againſt ſome meaſures of the court, he forced the miniſters

to

to take the other way, having behaved with unſpotted integrity in both; and if I am rightly informed of his reſolution by thoſe, who ſeem to know him very well, it will hardly be ever in the power of the greateſt man in England, or of the beſt friend he has in the world, to perſuade him to accept of a third. There is an ambition, with which theſe ſpreaders of calumny and their maſters are intirely unacquainted; the ambition of doing good and the receiving the reward in fame. He, who hath this ambition, can never be diſappointed in the other; and if any man, in our age and country, hath reaſon to be ſatisfied with his ſucceſs in the purſuit of this ambition, it is the gentleman, of whom we ſpeak.

Whenever the defamation, which hath been diſplayed againſt the other gentleman is examined with the leaſt knowledge of facts, or the leaſt impartiality of judgment, it will appear equally falſe, and perhaps ſtill more ſcandalous; for, in this caſe, the ſlanderers take an ungenerous and mean advantage, which they have not in the other; the advantage, which his ſingular ſituation gives them. They, who would have declined a conteſt with him, whilſt he was in a condition to anſwer for himſelf, have not bluſhed to declaim againſt him in another condition. They have experienced, in this caſe, that the unfortunate are not friendleſs. They may live, perhaps, to experience, in their own, that the guilty are ſo. Another advantage, which theſe ſlanderers take againſt this gentleman, ariſes from the various ſcenes of life, through which he hath paſſed; ſome diſtant in place; ſome ſecret in their nature.

Here

Here calumny hath more room to aſſert, and innocence leſs opportunity to defend. Common honeſty, in ſome caſes, and even decency, in others, ſhut the mouth of the man, who carries theſe qualities about him; and even more in his own cauſe than in that of another perſon; but calumny is ſubject to none of theſe controuls; and we ſpeak on our own knowledge, when we affirm that, in the preſent caſe, the falſe imputations, which the accuſers bring, are ſcreened from abſolute detection by nothing but the honour of the accuſed.

Let us take notice of ſome of the crimes, (for crimes and heinous crimes they would be, if the facts were, in any degree, true) which are laid to the charge of this gentleman.

His ingratitude and treachery to the late Duke of Marlborough and the Earl of Godolphin ſtand firſt in the roll. I believe no man acknowledges more ſincerely than he the ſuperior merit of theſe two illuſtrious men, or wiſhes more ardently that they were now alive, and had the conduct of the affairs of Great Britain; but I know no obligation of gratitude or honour, which he lay under to continue in their adminiſtration, when the meaſures of it were altered. They might have reaſons, perhaps, good reaſons, for altering their meaſures. He could have none in point of honour, whatever he might have had in point of intereſt, for complying with that alteration. Some of the enemies of this gentleman came into the world on ſuch a foot, that they might think it preferment to be the creatures of any men in power. He, who came into it upon another foot, was the friend, but not the creature of theſe

theſe great men, and he hath had the ſatisfaction of proving himſelf ſuch on different occaſions, and without oſtentation, at leaſt to one of them, at a time when the creatures of great men uſually renounce them; at a time, when they could do him neither good nor hurt. That he came to court, on the call of the late Queen, in oppoſition to them, and exerted himſelf in her ſervice, when they ſerved her no longer, will not be objected to him by any man, who thinks more allegiance due to the Prince than to the miniſter. If the preſent miniſter hath a mind to avow a contrary doctrine, he hath my conſent; but then let thoſe, who engage with him, remember on what terms they engage. On the ſame falſe principle is another accuſation brought. This gentleman had no patron, or patroneſs, but the late Queen. He neither projected, nor procured the diſgrace of her laſt miniſter, nor knew that it was reſolved, whatever he might ſuſpect, till he heard from herſelf that it was ſo. Much more might be ſaid on this article; but we chuſe to paſs it over for many reaſons, and, among others, for this; that whilſt we defend the living, we are unwilling to ſay any thing, which might be drawn by theſe ſlanderers into an inſult on the dead.

The laſt charge of ingratitude, brought againſt this gentleman, is hard to be anſwered ſeriouſly. Thus much however ſhall be ſaid truly, and ſeriouſly. He acknowledges, with the deepeſt ſenſe of gratitude poſſible, the clemency and goodneſs of his late Majeſty; but ſure he hath reaſon, if ever man had reaſon, to diſclaim all obligation to the miniſter.

miniſter. The mercy of the late King was extended to him unaſked and unearned. What followed many years afterwards, in part of his Majeſty's gracious intentions, was due ſolely to the King. That they were not fulfilled, was due ſolely to the miniſter. His ambition, his cauſeleſs jealouſy and private intereſt continued a ſort of proſcription, with much cruelty to the perſon concerned, and little regard to the declarations, which his royal Maſter had been pleaſed ſo frequently to make.

That this gentleman was engaged in the cauſe of the Pretender, is true. That he ſerved him unfaithfully, is falſe. He never entered into theſe engagements, or any commerce with him, till he had been attainted, and cut off from the body of his Majeſty's ſubjects. He never had any commerce, either direct or indirect, which was inconſiſtent with theſe engagements, whilſt he continued in them; and ſince he was out of them, he hath had no commerce, either direct or indirect, in favour of that cauſe. On ſuch an occaſion as this it is decent, not arrogant to challenge all mankind. I do therefore, in the behalf of this gentleman, defy them to produce one ſingle proof, in contradiction of any one of theſe general affirmations. For the truth of ſome I may appeal even to thoſe, who have been in the ſervice of his late, and are in that of his preſent Majeſty; and particularly to a noble lord, who by the poſt he was in, when moſt of theſe tranſactions paſſed, muſt have had the beſt opportunities of knowing the truth of them, and by whoſe teſtimony I am willing that the gentleman I defend ſhould ſtand or fall; a deciſion to which, I am ſure, he will himſelf be ready to ſubmit his life, and, what is more, his honour.

I make you no excuſe for the length of my letter. The juſtice I have done, or endeavoured to do, to thoſe, who have been vilely calumniated, and particularly on the occaſion of your writings and of mine, will be a ſufficient excuſe of itſelf.

I am, Sir, &c.

END of VOL. II.

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